

1 **Human Cytomegalovirus Drives WDR5 to the Virion Assembly Compartment to**
2 **Facilitate Virion Assembly**

3 Bo Yang^{1,2}, YongXuan Yao^{1,2}, Hui Wu³, Hong Yang^{4,5}, Xue-Hui Ma^{4,5}, Dong Li^{4,5},
4 Xian-Zhang Wang^{4,5}, Sheng-Nan Huang^{4,5}, Xuan Jiang^{1,2}, Shuang Cheng⁴, Jin-Yan
5 Sun⁴, Zhen-Li Huang⁶, CongJian Zhao⁷, Michael A. McVoy⁸, Jin-Hyun Ahn⁹, Wen-
6 Bo Zeng⁴, Sitang Gong^{1,*,&}, William J. Britt^{3,*,&}, Min-Hua Luo^{1,2,4,5,*,&}

7 ¹Joint Center of Translational Precision Medicine, Guangzhou Institute of Pediatrics,
8 Guangzhou Women and Children Medical Center, Guangzhou, China.

9 ²Joint Center of Translational Precision Medicine, Wuhan Institute of Virology,
10 Chinese Academy of Sciences, Wuhan, China.

11 ³Department of Pediatrics, University of Alabama School of Medicine, Birmingham,
12 Alabama, USA.

13 ⁴State Key Laboratory of Virology, CAS Center for Excellence in Brain Science and
14 Intelligence Technology, Center for Biosafety Mega-Science, Wuhan Institute of
15 Virology, Chinese Academy of Sciences, Wuhan, China.

16 ⁵University of Chinese Academy of Sciences, Beijing, China.

17 ⁶Britton Chance Center for Biomedical Photonics, Wuhan National Laboratory for
18 Optoelectronics, Huazhong University of Science and Technology, Wuhan, China.

19 ⁷Aier School of Ophthalmology, Aier Eye Institute, Central South University,
20 Changsha, China

21 ⁸Department of Pediatrics, Virginia Commonwealth University School of Medicine,
22 Richmond, Virginia, USA

23 ⁹Department of Molecular Cell Biology, Sungkyunkwan University School of
24 Medicine, Samsung Medical Center, Suwon, Republic of Korea.

25

26 **Running title: WDR5 Facilitates HCMV Virion Assembly**

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28 virion assembly compartment; vAC.

29 ***Corresponding author:**

30 luomh@wh.iov.cn (M.L.); sitangg@126.com

31 wbritt@peds.uab.edu.

32 [&]M.L., W.B. and S.G. contributed equally to this work.

33 **Abstract (156 words)**

34 We previously reported that human cytomegalovirus (HCMV) utilizes the
35 cellular protein WDR5 to facilitate capsid nuclear egress. Here, we further show that
36 HCMV infection drives WDR5 to the perinuclear region by a mechanism that requires
37 viral replication and intact microtubules. WDR5 accumulated in the virion assembly
38 compartment (vAC) and co-localized with vAC markers of gamma-tubulin (γ -tubulin),
39 early endosomes, and viral vAC marker proteins pp65, pp28, and glycoprotein B (gB).
40 WDR5 interacted with multiple virion proteins, including MCP, pp150, pp65, pIRS1,
41 and pTRS1, which may explain the increasing WDR5 accumulation in the vAC
42 during infection. WDR5 was then incorporated into HCMV virions and localized to
43 the tegument layer, as demonstrated by fractionation and immune-gold electron
44 microscopy. Thus, WDR5 is driven to the vAC and incorporated into virions,
45 suggesting that WDR5 facilitates HCMV replication at later stage of virion assembly
46 besides the capsid nuclear egress stage. These data highlight that WDR5 is a potential
47 target for antiviral therapy.

48 **Importance (127 words)**

49 Human cytomegalovirus (HCMV) has a large (~235-kb) genome that contains
50 over 170 ORFs and exploits numerous cellular factors to facilitate its replication. In
51 the late phase of HCMV infection cytoplasmic membranes are profoundly
52 reconfigured to establish the virion assembly compartment (vAC), which is important
53 for efficient assembly of progeny virions. We previously reported that WDR5
54 promotes HCMV nuclear egress. Here, we show that WDR5 is further driven to the
55 vAC and incorporated into virions, perhaps to facilitate efficient virion maturation.
56 This work identified potential roles for WDR5 in HCMV replication in the
57 cytoplasmic stages of virion assembly. Taken together, WDR5 plays a critical role in
58 HCMV capsid nuclear egress and is important for virion assembly, and thus is a
59 potential target for antiviral treatment of HCMV-associated diseases.

60 **Introduction**

61 Human cytomegalovirus (HCMV) is a ubiquitous pathogen that is highly adapted
62 to its human host. Approximately 50 to 90% of adults are infected globally (1) and in
63 China seroprevalence is as high as 93.7% (2). About 90% of primary HCMV
64 infections in immunocompetent individuals are either asymptomatic or mildly
65 symptomatic. In addition, HCMV is a leading cause of congenital infections
66 worldwide. Following primary infection, the virus remains latent and establishes life-
67 long persistence in its host. However, HCMV can be reactivated and cause severe
68 disease in immunosuppressed or immunodeficient individuals, such as recipients of
69 solid organ or bone marrow transplants and AIDS patients (3-7). In these patients,
70 HCMV infection contributes to multiple end-organ diseases, including pneumonia,
71 gastrointestinal diseases, retinitis, central nervous system diseases, poor engraftment,
72 severe graft-versus-host reaction, and can result in high mortality rates (8-11). In
73 patients receiving hematopoietic stem cell transplantation, the incidence of HCMV
74 disease is as high as 30-70% (12). In addition, congenital HCMV infection is a
75 leading cause of birth defects and is associated with neonatal mortality and permanent
76 developmental sequelae (13-16).

77 A characteristic feature of HCMV infection is profound remodeling of the
78 secretory and endocytic system (Golgi, trans-Golgi network, and early endosomes) to
79 form nested, cylindrical layers in a structure termed the virion assembly compartment
80 (vAC) (4, 17-22), which is unique in HCMV infection when compared to other
81 herpesviruses (23). Although not essential for virion production, vAC formation has
82 been shown to be necessary for efficient HCMV virion assembly and maturation.
83 Multiple viral and cellular proteins are reported to participate in vAC formation. Viral
84 protein pUL136 is important for vAC formation and efficient virion assembly. Virus

85 mutants lacking UL136 produce less properly enveloped virions along with a larger
86 number of dense bodies compared to wildtype virus (24). Other viral proteins pUL48,
87 pUL94, and pUL103 are also important for vAC development (21). Interestingly,
88 HCMV-encoded miRNAs UL112-1, US5-1, and US5-2 target host secretory pathway
89 factors to facilitate vAC formation (25). Cellular proteins, including RhoB (22),
90 IFITMs (23), STX5 (26), dynein (27), BiP (27, 28), Bicaudal D1 (29), Rab11 and
91 FIP4 (30), have also been shown to localize to vAC.

92 A number of cellular proteins are relocated to the vAC and subsequently
93 incorporated into virions. Proteomic analyses have identified over 70 viral and
94 cellular proteins in HCMV virions. Virion-associated cellular proteins are involved in
95 a wide range of processes and functions, including ATP binding, Ca²⁺ signaling,
96 signal transduction, transcription, and translation (31). WD repeat-containing protein
97 5 (WDR5) is a highly conserved WD-40 repeat protein that is critical for regulating
98 multiple cellular processes. The most common function of WD-repeat proteins is to
99 serve as a rigid scaffold for protein-protein interactions, which facilitates formation
100 and/or stabilization of multi-protein complexes (32), such as MOF (males absent on
101 the first)-containing NSL (33), KANSL1 and KANSL2 (33), and histone H3 at lysine
102 4 (H3K4) methyltransferases of the SET1-family (Set1A, Set1B, MLL1, MLL2,
103 MLL3, and MLL4) (34-37). Thus, previous studies of WDR5 have focused on
104 epigenetics (38-41); however, WDR5 can also stabilize actin architecture to promote
105 multi-ciliated cell formation (42) and is important for embryonic stem cell
106 reprogramming, self-renewal, and maintenance of pluripotency (43, 44).

107 The role of WDR5 in RNA virus infections has also been investigated. Upon
108 Sendai virus infection, WDR5 is translocated from the nucleus to the mitochondria
109 and is essential for formation of the VISA-associated complex (45). Measles virus

110 recruits WDR5 into viral inclusion bodies in the cytoplasm to facilitate virus
111 replication (46). Our previous work showed that WDR5 promotes HCMV replication
112 through facilitating capsid nuclear egress (47). In the present study, we further
113 demonstrate that in HCMV-infected cells WDR5 protein levels increase in the
114 cytoplasm and that WDR5 is translocated to and accumulates in the vAC. The
115 accumulated WDR5 is incorporated into and localizes within the tegument layer of
116 virions which facilitates virion morphogenesis.

117 **Results**

118 **Perinuclear accumulation of WDR5 is induced by HCMV infection.** It has been
119 reported that cellular protein WDR5 is translocated from the nucleus to mitochondria
120 during Sendai virus infection and to viral replication centers during measles virus
121 infection. As both are RNA viruses (45, 46), we sought to investigate whether a
122 corresponding WDR5 relocation occurs during HCMV infection. We initially
123 determined if WDR5 is redistributed during HCMV infection of immortalized human
124 embryonic lung fibroblasts (HELFs). In mock-infected HELFs, WDR5 had diffuse
125 nuclear localization with a single small perinuclear punctum which coincided with
126 MTOC, whereas in HCMV-infected cells WDR5 was clearly localized in a
127 perinuclear region (Fig 1A). To exclude the possibility that WDR5 perinuclear
128 accumulation is limited to HELFs or infection by HCMV strain Towne, similar
129 experiments were performed with primary cell HELs and U251 glioma cells infected
130 with HCMV strains Towne or AD169, and similar perinuclear WDR5 localization was
131 observed (data not shown). In addition, similar perinuclear localization was also
132 observed during murine cytomegalovirus (MCMV) infection of mouse NIH3T3
133 fibroblasts (Fig 1B). Interestingly, this effect was not observed during infection of
134 HELFs by other DNA viruses that have not been reported to form vAC-like structures
135 during infection, including herpes simplex virus type 1 (HSV-1), varicella-zoster virus
136 (VZV), adenovirus (AdV), or autographa californica multiple nuclear polyhedrosis
137 virus (AcMNPV) (Fig 1C). These data suggest that the perinuclear accumulation of
138 WDR5 is specifically induced by HCMV or MCMV infection.

139

140 **WDR5 perinuclear accumulation progresses with HCMV infection.** To gain
141 further insights into changes in subcellular localization of WDR5 during HCMV

142 infection, a time course confocal microscopy study was performed from 12 to 96 hpi.
143 Focal perinuclear accumulation of WDR5 was first observed at 24 hpi and increased
144 as the infection progressed (Fig 2A and B).

145 To further investigate the impact of HCMV infection on WDR5 and its
146 cytosolic/nuclear distribution, HCMV- and mock-infected cells were harvested at 96
147 hpi and cytosolic and nuclear fractions were analyzed by immunoblot (IB). The
148 efficiency of nuclear and cytosolic fractionation was confirmed by probing for cellular
149 markers GAPDH and Lamin B1, which localize to cytoplasm and nuclei, respectively,
150 as well as for viral proteins pp28 (pUL99) and IE1, which also localize to the cytosol
151 and nucleus, respectively (Fig 2C). In mock-infected cells, WDR5 was located in the
152 nuclear fraction and at a much lower level in the cytosol. In contrast, HCMV-infected
153 cells contained less WDR5 protein in the nuclear fraction, while with a significantly
154 higher level of WDR5 protein in the cytosolic fraction (Fig 2C). Previous studies have
155 shown that nuclear membranes are significantly remodeled during HCMV infection
156 (27). To exclude a possibility that higher cytosolic protein level of WDR5 was a result
157 from simple diffusion, leptomycin B (LMB) was used to inhibit nuclear export.
158 Nuclear retention of WDR5 was clearly observed and perinuclear accumulation of
159 WDR5 was prevented by LMB treatment (Fig 2D). These data suggested that nuclear
160 WDR5 relocated to the cytoplasm during HCMV infection is not due to diffusion.

161

162 **WDR5 perinuclear accumulation requires viral replication.** To determine the
163 kinetic class of viral gene expression required to alter WDR5 localization, HELFs
164 were incubated with HCMV virions that were UV-irradiated to block all *de novo* viral
165 gene expression or with infectious virions in the presence of the viral DNA
166 polymerase inhibitors ganciclovir (GCV) or phosphonoacetic acid (PAA) to block

167 viral DNA synthesis and late gene expression. Immunoblot at 72 hpi confirmed that
168 UV irradiation blocked expression of all viral proteins tested, including IE1/IE2, the
169 early/late protein pUL44, and the true late glycoprotein B (gB). In contrast, infection
170 in the presence of either GCV or PAA had no effect on IE1, while IE2 and pUL44
171 levels were reduced, and, as predicted for a late protein, gB expression was fully
172 blocked (Fig 3A). WDR5 protein and mRNA levels were compared during HCMV
173 infection with or without GCV or PAA treatment. Compared to the mock-infected
174 group, both WDR5 protein (Fig 3A) and mRNA levels (Fig. 3B) were elevated in
175 virus-infected cells in both presence and absence of GCV or PAA. In HCMV-infected
176 cells WDR5 protein levels were not significantly altered by GCV or PAA treatment.

177 We further investigated whether WDR5 perinuclear accumulation is altered by
178 treatment of GCV or PAA. Characterization of replicate cultures by
179 immunofluorescence revealed that WDR5 localization was similar to that in mock
180 infected cells when virions were inactivated by exposure to UV. Both GCV and PAA
181 dramatically inhibited perinuclear accumulation of WDR5 and perinuclear foci
182 formation (Fig 3C). Although the expression of WDR5 was elevated by virus
183 infection in the presence of GCV and PAA (Fig 3A and 3B), the perinuclear-
184 accumulated WDR5 was still dramatically inhibited. These results indicated that
185 WDR5 perinuclear accumulation and perinuclear foci formation are not due to
186 increasing WDR5 levels, but are due to relocalization of WDR5 by a process that
187 requires HCMV DNA synthesis and/or *de novo* synthesis of viral late proteins.

188

189 **Accumulation of WDR5 in perinuclear vACs requires microtubule**
190 **polymerization.** The location, morphology, and dependence on viral late gene
191 expression suggested that WDR5 may be accumulating in the vAC. To confirm this

192 possibility, colocalization of WDR5 with the vAC markers was examined. At 72 hpi,
193 WDR5 accumulated in a juxtannuclear region in cells with kidney-shaped nuclei that
194 also displayed cytoskeletal filaments (α -tubulin) radiating out to the rim of the
195 plasma membrane (Fig 4A, a to d). This region also co-localized with gamma-tubulin
196 (Fig 4A, e to h), which is the marker of the microtubule organizing center (MTOC)
197 (48). This juxtannuclear region was wrapped around by a tightly nested ring of Golgi
198 elements (anti-58K, Fig 4A, i to l) and colocalized well with early endosome marker
199 EEA1 (Fig 4A, m to p). These characteristics have all been reported for the vAC (18),
200 and confirmed that WDR5 accumulates in the vAC.

201 To determine if WDR5 accumulation in the vAC was microtubule dependent
202 similar to virion structural proteins such as pp150 (29), replicate cultures to those
203 shown in Fig 4A were treated with nocodazole (NOC) to disrupt microtubule
204 polymerization (49) and analyzed by IFA after 20 min, 4h, or 6h of NOC treatment.
205 While γ -tubulin was less sensitive to NOC treatment (Fig 4B, c and g), α -tubulin
206 filaments became fragmented and punctate in distribution after 4-6 h NOC treatment
207 (Fig 4B, k and o). Concomitant with the fragmentation of microtubules, WDR5
208 perinuclear foci dispersed (Fig 4B, f, j and n).

209 In HCMV-infected cells, the vAC is enriched in various viral capsid, tegument,
210 and envelope proteins (17, 18). To further confirm that accumulation of WDR5 in
211 perinuclear foci resulted from recruitment of WDR5 to the vAC, infected cells were
212 co-stained for WDR5 and viral vAC markers, including the tegument proteins pp28
213 and pp65 and the envelope glycoprotein gB (18). As shown in Fig 4C, pp28, pp65,
214 and gB closely colocalized with WDR5. A three-dimensional (3-D) reconstruction
215 from Z-stack images of the cell shown in the bottom panel of Fig 4C clearly

216 demonstrated the colocalization of WDR5 with vAC marker gB. All these data
217 indicated that WDR5 was driven to vAC during HCMV infection.

218

219 **WDR5 plays a crucial role in vAC formation and virion morphogenesis.**

220 To further explore whether WDR5 contributes to formation of vAC, we used a
221 previously described pair of HELF-derived cell lines, one in which WDR5 is knocked
222 down by shRNA (KD) and one expressing an irrelevant control shRNA (Ctl) (47). In
223 KD cells, WDR5 knockdown altered formation and/or morphology of vAC, as
224 determined by staining for gB. Irregular vAC exhibited multiple juxtannuclear foci,
225 while in some infected cells no distinct vAC was observed (Fig 5A). Since proper
226 vAC formation is necessary for efficient HCMV virion assembly and maturation. We
227 further examine the virion morphogenesis by TEM in Ctl and KD cells. We
228 previously have reported that knockdown of WDR5 dramatically decreased the
229 number of matured virions in the vAC (47). As shown in Fig 5B (f to k), knockdown
230 of WDR5 resulted in decrease of mature virions and distinct defects in virion
231 maturation (white arrow). Nearly 39% of viral particles lacked envelope in KD cells
232 (Fig. 5C). Inhibition of viral replication (Fig 3A and C) and disrupting microtubules
233 (Fig 4B) both affect WDR5 accumulation in vAC, knock down WDR5 by shRNA
234 altered formation and/or morphology of vAC (Fig 4D). All these data strongly support
235 that WDR5 plays a crucial role in vAC formation and virion morphogenesis.

236

237 **The N-terminal domain of WDR5 is critical for WDR5 accumulation in vAC.**

238 The functional implementation of a protein depends on its subcellular distribution. To
239 dissect which domain of WDR5 is critical for its accumulation in the vAC, a serial
240 mutant of WDR5 were constructed based on its structure. WDR5 contains seven

241 typical WD40 repeat domains (WD1 to WD7, Fig 6A), each WD40 repeat motif
242 forms a blade β -propeller (37). A series of WDR5 deletion mutants were constructed
243 as illustrated in Fig 6A. The distribution of Flag-tagged full-length WDR5 and the
244 indicated mutants were determined. All the WDR5 constructs were transfected into
245 HELF cells for 24 h, followed by either mock- or HCMV-infection at an MOI of 3.
246 The full-length WDR5 showed a predominant nuclear localization in mock-infected
247 HELFs, which is consistent with the results for endogenous WDR5 described above,
248 accumulated in vAC in infected cells. Two mutants, Flag-aa1-82 and Flag-aa1-42,
249 which retained the N-terminal amino acids 1-42, showed pan-cellular distribution
250 upon mock-infection but still localized to vAC upon HCMV infection. In contrast,
251 mutants lacking the amino acids 1-42 displayed mainly nuclear localization (*e.g.*,
252 Flag-aa43-334) or pan-cellular distribution, and were not relocalized to vAC during
253 HCMV infection. Taken together, these data indicate that the N-terminal amino acids
254 1-42 of WDR5 are critical for WDR5 accumulation in vACs.

255

256 **WDR5 co-fractionates with HCMV particles.** Since WDR5 accumulated in the
257 vAC, we next sought to determine if WDR5 is incorporated into viral particles.
258 HELFs were mock- or HCMV-infected and cells were lysed by sonication. Intra- and
259 extracellular particles were combined and then analyzed by iodixanol density gradient
260 centrifugation, as illustrated in Fig 7A. Fractions were collected from top to bottom of
261 the gradient, and analyzed by immuno-dot-blot for the presence of WDR5, gB, or
262 pUL48, and for viral DNA by qPCR. WDR5 was undetectable in all fractions derived
263 from mock-infected cultures (Fig 7B). In contrast, WDR5 was detected in fractions
264 derived from HCMV-infected cultures and fractions with peak levels of WDR5

265 corresponded with those containing peak levels of gB, pUL48, and viral DNA (Fig 7B
266 and 7C), suggesting that WDR5 is associated with HCMV particles.

267

268 **WDR5 is present in the tegument layer of HCMV virions.** To determine whether
269 WDR5 is incorporated into virions, extracellular virions were purified from infected-
270 cell culture supernatants as described previously (50). The purified virions were then
271 either mock treated or treated with 2% Triton X-100 at room temperature for 1 h,
272 layered onto a 10% to 50% iodixanol continuous gradient, and ultra-centrifuged at
273 $100,000 \times g$ for 2 h. Fractions were collected from top to bottom of the gradient and
274 analyzed by IB for WDR5, structural viral proteins, including major capsid protein
275 (MCP), tegument proteins pp28, pp65, pp71, pIRS1, pTRS1, pUL48, and the
276 envelope glycoprotein B (gB), as well as the non-structural viral proteins IE1/2 and
277 pUL44. IE1/2 and pUL44 were present in infected-cell lysates but were not in any
278 gradient fractions, confirming effective separation of virions from infected-cells (Fig
279 8A). In gradient fractions of mock-treated virions, fractions 9 and 10 contained peak
280 levels of MCP, tegument proteins, gB, and WDR5 (Fig 8A, upper panel). In gradient
281 fractions of Triton X-100-treated virions, peak levels of MCP and tegument proteins
282 shifted to fraction 11, while the majority of gB and a fraction of the outer tegument
283 protein pp28 shifted to lower density fractions and no longer co-fractionated with
284 MCP (Fig 8A, lower panel). These results suggested that Triton X-100 treatment
285 removed the envelope and some of the outer tegument layers from the virion particles.
286 The finding that WDR5 remained predominantly in fraction 11 following Triton X-
287 100 treatment (Fig 8A, lower panel) suggested that WDR5 was either associated with
288 the inner tegument layers or was directly attached to capsids.

289 Immunogold labeling was next used to further examine WDR5 association with
290 virions. Purified virions were again either mock treated or treated with Triton X-100
291 (as described above) to allow access of antibodies to proteins in the inner layers of
292 treated viral particles. The particles were then labeled with mAbs to gB, pp28, or
293 WDR5 followed by immunogold labeling and detection by electron microscopy.
294 Consistent with the established presence of gB in the virion envelope, gold particles
295 were observed decorating the surface of mock-treated particles labeled using anti-gB
296 antibody (Fig 8B, panel a). In contrast, and consistent with the known localization of
297 pp28 in the tegument of the virion, gold particles were observed decorating the
298 surface of Triton X-100-treated particles labeled using anti-pp28 antibody (Fig 8B,
299 panel b). Immunogold labeling with anti-WDR5 antibody was similar to that of pp28,
300 suggesting that WDR5 was localized within the tegument layer (Fig 8B, panel c).
301 Moreover, capsids purified from infected-cell nuclei (before nuclear egress) or from
302 virions purified from culture supernatants both contained WDR5 (Fig. 8C).

303 Taken together, these results indicate that WDR5 is associated with capsids
304 before nuclear egress, translocates to and accumulates in vAC, finally incorporates
305 into virion tegument layer, which is critical for virion morphogenesis.

306

307 **WDR5 interacts with viral structural proteins.** The above findings indicate
308 that WDR5 is associated with capsids before nuclear egress, then accumulates in the
309 vAC, and is ultimately incorporated into virions. We therefore infer that WDR5 likely
310 interacts with one or more viral structural proteins. To test this hypothesis, Flag-
311 tagged WDR5 was overexpressed in HELF cells followed by mock- or HCMV-
312 infection for 96 h. Cell lysates were immunoprecipitated (IP) with anti-Flag antibody
313 and subjected to SDS-PAGE and Coomassie staining. There were four different

314 distinct protein species (Fig. 9A, red arrows) in the viral-infected immunoprecipitates
315 when compared to the mock control. These four species were further analyzed by
316 liquid chromatography-tandem mass spectrometry (LC-MS/MS) to identify and
317 quantify the proteins. As shown in Fig 9B, viral structural proteins, including MCP,
318 pp150, pp65, pIRS1, and pTRS1, were identified in the immunoprecipitates.

319 To confirm WDR5-viral protein interactions, HEK293T cells were co-transfected
320 with plasmids expressing HA-tagged WDR5 and each of the candidate viral protein
321 interactors (Myc-MCP, Flag-pp65, Myc-pp150, Flag-pIRS1, or V5-pTRS1). Each
322 viral protein was immunoprecipitated using their respective epitope tags and the
323 immunoprecipitates were then probed for WDR5 by IB for the HA tag. WDR5-HA
324 could be detected in IPs for MCP, pp65, pp150, pIRS1, and pTRS1 but not for pp28
325 or the IgG controls (Fig. 9C-H). Taken together, these results indicate that WDR5
326 interacts with viral structural proteins, which explains its accumulation in vAC and its
327 role in facilitating mature virion morphogenesis.

328

329

330 Discussion

331 During the course of a viral infection, cellular proteins can be incorporated into
332 viral particles. For example, both LC-MS/MS and multidimensional protein
333 identification technology (MudPIT) have been used to identify components of
334 influenza virions, and while seventeen virion-associated cellular proteins were
335 identified by both methods, six others were identified only with the LC-MS/MS
336 analysis and 13 were identified only with MudPIT analysis (51), suggesting that
337 multiple approaches may be necessary to identify all of the virion-associated cellular
338 factors. In some cases, cellular proteins are incorporated randomly and have not been
339 shown to play a role in the infectivity of the mature virion, whereas in other cases
340 cellular proteins are selectively incorporated into virions through specific interactions
341 with virion structural proteins or the viral genome. With regard to HCMV, LC-
342 MS/MS has identified over 70 host proteins in virions. These cellular proteins
343 function in diverse processes, including ATP and Ca²⁺ binding, chaperones,
344 cytoskeleton, enzymatic activities, glycolysis, protein transport, signal transduction,
345 transcription, and translation (31). Some have been reported to function during certain
346 stages of the infection process, suggesting that these proteins are incorporated into the
347 virion to facilitate virus infectivity and replication (31). Others may serve to evade
348 host immune mechanisms; for example, in the late stage of infection intracellular viral
349 DNA sensors and restriction factors such as IFI16 traffic to vAC where they are
350 incorporated into mature virions (52).

351 Previously, we found that HCMV infection increases WDR5, and WDR5
352 facilitates capsid nuclear egress (47). In the present study we analyzed the cellular
353 distribution of WDR5 and observed that the distribution of WDR5 was altered by
354 HCMV infection, as it accumulated in vAC. Treatment with viral replication

355 inhibitors (GCV or PAA) and microtubule polymerization inhibitor (NOC)
356 significantly prevented WDR5 accumulation in the vAC. Inhibition of viral
357 replication, including viral DNA replication and expression of late viral structure
358 proteins, impairs formation of the vAC. The vAC formation is also dissolved by
359 microtubule polymerization inhibitor. Under both conditions, the protein levels of
360 WDR5 are not significantly changed, but vAC formation is dramatically impaired.
361 Thus, relocation and accumulation of WDR5 in vAC requires HCMV late gene
362 expression and depends on microtubule polymerization. Taken together, these
363 findings suggest that WDR5 accumulation in the vAC occurs as a result of a specific
364 HCMV-dependent mechanism, although this mechanism remains undefined.

365 In order to determine if WDR5 was incorporated into virions, we analyzed intra-
366 and extracellular viral particles and purified virions for the presence of WDR5 after
367 purification of virion particles by density gradient centrifugation. In each case WDR5
368 cofractionated with markers for virions or capsid particles but was not detected in
369 gradient fractions derived from uninfected cultures. Furthermore, we showed that
370 WDR5 interacts with virion tegument proteins pp65, pIRS1, and pTRS1. Therefore,
371 we propose that WDR5 resides within the tegument layer of HCMV virions. To
372 investigate the location of WDR5 in virions, we treated virions with Triton X-100, a
373 detergent that solubilizes virion membranes. Following Triton X-100 treatment, a
374 significant amount of WDR5 remained associated with the detergent treated virions.
375 In addition, immuno-gold electron microscopy indicated that WDR5 was present
376 within virions and was localized to the tegument. These data, together with our
377 previous findings that WDR5 plays a role in the assembly of the NEC and capsid
378 egress, suggest that during nuclear egress WDR5 may initially enter the perinuclear
379 cisterna together with capsids and travels along with capsids to the cytoplasm and

380 vAC (Fig 10). WDR5 then interacts with viral structural proteins (*e.g.*, MCP, pp150,
381 and pp65), thereby accumulating in vAC; finally, WDR5 is packaged into virions
382 along with numerous tegument proteins and glycoproteins.

383 In summary, the data provided in this study suggest a dual role for WDR5 during
384 HCMV assembly. During nuclear egress, it modulates NEC assembly and facilitates
385 capsid nuclear egress. Subsequently, it translocates along with capsid from the
386 nucleus into the cytoplasm by interacting with MCP; it accumulates in vAC by
387 interacting with multiple late viral structures proteins and is incorporated into virions.
388 Since WDR5 interacts with multiple viral structure proteins, it could function during
389 virion morphogenesis by stabilizing multi-protein complexes. WDR5 plays a critical
390 role in capsid nuclear egress, vAC formation, and virion assembly. Our findings
391 further demonstrate that HCMV manipulates existing cellular mechanisms, including
392 the localization of cellular proteins, to facilitate its replication, assembly, and egress.
393 These data highlight that WDR5 is a potential new target for antiviral drug
394 development.

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407

408 **Conflict of interest**

409 The authors declared that they have no conflicts of interest to this work.

410

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415

416 **Materials and Methods**

417 **Ethics statement.** Human embryonic lung fibroblast cells (HELs) were isolated from
418 postmortem embryo lung tissue. The original source of the anonymized tissues was
419 Zhongnan Hospital of Wuhan University (China). The cell isolation procedures and
420 research plans were approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB)
421 (WIVH10201202) according to the Guidelines for Biomedical Research Involving
422 Human Subjects at Wuhan Institute of Virology, Chinese Academy of Sciences. The
423 need for written or oral consents was waived by the IRB (53).

424

425 **Cells and cell culture.** HELs were isolated and maintained as described previously
426 (53). HELF, kindly provided by Dr. Jason J. Chen at Columbia University, are human
427 embryonic lung fibroblasts that have been retrovirally transduced with human
428 telomerase (hTERT). Clonal cell lines isolated from HELFs that were transduced with
429 WDR5 shRNA (KD) and scrambled shRNA (Ctl) were described previously (47).
430 Both HELs and HELF were cultured in Minimum Essential Medium (MEM,
431 Cat.#41500-034, Thermo Fisher) supplemented with 10% fetal bovine serum (FBS,
432 Cat.#10099-141, Thermo Fisher) and penicillin-streptomycin (100 U/ml and 100
433 µg/ml, respectively; Cat.#15140-122, Thermo Fisher). Human embryonic kidney
434 293T cells (HEK293T) were purchased from ATCC (CRL-11268) and cultured in
435 Dulbecco's Modified Eagle Medium (DMEM; Cat.#11995-123, Thermo Fisher)
436 supplemented with 10% FBS and penicillin-streptomycin, as above. Cells were
437 cultured at 37 °C in a humidified atmosphere containing 5% CO₂.

438

439 **Viruses.** HCMV Towne strain (ATCC-VR 977) was used in this study. HSV-1 strain
440 H129 expressing GFP was previously constructed by our laboratory (54). VZV Oka

441 strain expressing GFP (55) was a gift from Dr. Hua Zhu, Rutgers-New Jersey Medical
442 School, and MCMV strain K181 was a gift from Qiyi Tang, Howard University
443 College of Medicine, USA. GFP-expressing AdV and AcMNPV were provided by Dr.
444 Zhengli Shi and Zhihong Hu, Wuhan Institute of Virology, Chinese Academy of
445 Sciences, respectively.

446

447 **Plasmid construction.** Primers used for plasmid construction are shown in Table 1.
448 WDR5 cDNA (GenBank #NM_017588) was derived by reverse transcription as
449 described previously (47). The cDNA was PCR amplified then cloned into either
450 *EcoRI/XhoI*-restricted pCMV-HA to generate plasmid HA-WDR5 or into
451 *XbaI/EcoRI*-restricted pCDH-Flag to generate Flag-WDR5. The *UL83* ORF encoding
452 pp65 and *IRS1* ORF encoding pIRS1 were PCR amplified from Towne-BAC genome
453 (56) and cloned into *BamHI/KpnI*-restricted pXJ40-Flag to generate plasmid Flag-
454 pp65 and Flag-pIRS1, respectively. The *UL99* ORF encoding pp28 was PCR
455 amplified and cloned into *BamHI/XbaI*-restricted pcDNA3.1-V5/6×His to generate
456 plasmid pp28-6×his. The *UL86* ORF encoding MCP and *UL32* ORF encoding pp150
457 were amplified from Towne-BAC genome (56) and inserted into a vector with 6×Myc
458 by cloning recombination (ClonExpress II One Step Cloning Kit, Cat.#C112,
459 Vazyme). The *TRS1* ORF encoding pTRS1 fused with a carboxyl-terminal 6×His
460 epitope tag and V5 tag was a gift from Dr. Adam P. Geballe, Fred Hutchinson Cancer
461 Research Center and University of Washington, which have been previously
462 described as pEQ981 (57). All the primers used in this study are listed in Table 1.

463

464 **Transient transfection.** 1.5×10^6 HEK293T cells were seeded into 100-mm dishes.
465 The next day the medium was changed 2h prior to transfection via $\text{Ca}_2(\text{PO}_4)_2$

466 precipitation with 10 µg HA-WDR5 along with 10 µg pp28-his, Myc-MCP, Flag-
467 pp65, Myc-pp150, Flag-pIRS1, or pTRS1-V5, as described previously (53). 2×10^6
468 HELFs were seeded onto coverslips in 12-well plates. Medium was changed at 2h
469 prior to transfection in the next day. Plasmids (1.2 µg for each well) expressing full-
470 length and truncated WDR5 were transfected into HELFs using Lipofectamine 2000
471 reagent (Cat.#11668-019; Thermo) according to the manufacturer's instructions.

472

473 **Quantitative reverse transcriptase PCR (qRT-PCR).** HELFs were infected at an
474 MOI of 3 and harvested at the indicated times post infection. A total of 1×10^6 cells
475 were used for total RNA extraction using RNAiso Plus reagent (Cat.#9109, TaKaRa),
476 followed by treatment with 10 U of recombinant DNase I (Cat.#2270A, TaKaRa) to
477 remove residual DNA. One µg RNA of each sample was reverse transcribed with a
478 RevertAid H Minus first-strand cDNA synthesis kit (Cat.#K1631, Fermentas) with
479 random primers. Then qPCR was performed on a real-time thermocycler (Bio-Rad;
480 Connect) using SYBR green PCR master mix (Cat.#4309155, Applied Biosystems) in
481 20 µl reactions for 40 PCR cycles as described previously (58). The PCR primers for
482 WDR5 were: 5'-GGTGGGAAGTGGATTGTGTC-3' and 5'-
483 GCAGCAGAGGCGATGATG-3'. The PCR primers for GAPDH were: 5'-
484 GAGTCAACGGATTTGGTCGT-3' and 5'-GACAAGCTTCCCGTTCTCAG-3'.

485

486 **IB.** Cells were harvested in cell lysis buffer (Cat.#P0013, Beyotime) containing
487 protease inhibitor cocktail (Cat.#04693159001, Roche) and homogenized by
488 ultrasonication. Protein concentrations of lysates were determined by Bradford assay
489 (Cat.#500-0205, Bio-Rad). After boiling with loading buffer, cell lysates containing
490 equal protein amounts were separated by SDS-PAGE and transferred to PVDF

491 membranes (Cat.#ISEQ00010, Millipore). Membranes were sequentially probed with
492 primary antibodies and appropriate peroxidase-conjugated secondary antibodies. All
493 antibodies used for IB are listed in Table 2. The viral antibodies for IE1 (59), pUL48
494 (60), pIRS1 (61), pTRS1 (61) and MCP (62) and mIE1 (63) were described
495 previously. Blots were developed using the SuperSignal West Femto
496 Chemiluminescent Substrate (Cat.#34095, Thermo Fisher), signals were detected
497 using a FluorChem HD2 System (Alpha Innotech), and quantification was performed
498 using ImageJ software (NIH).

499

500 **IP.** HEL cells were mock infected or infected with HCMV strain Towne at an MOI of
501 3 and harvested at 72 hpi. Cells were lysed in IP lysis buffer (Cat.#P0013, Beyotime)
502 for 1h at 4 °C then centrifuged at 120,000 × g for 5 min to remove cell debris.
503 Samples were mock treated or nuclease treated by incubation with 10 mM MgCl₂, 100
504 µg/ml Dnase I (Cat.#2270A, TaKaRa) and 100 µg/ml Rnase A (Cat.#AC118,
505 OMEGA) for 1 h at 37 °C. IP was performed by incubation of the resulting lysates
506 overnight at 4 °C with mouse monoclonal anti-Flag antibody (Cat.# F3165, Sigma) or
507 with normal mouse IgG (Cat.#A7028, Beyotime). Protein A+G agarose beads
508 (Cat.#P2012, Beyotime) were added and incubated for 3 h at 4 °C and then washed
509 five times with lysis buffer. Loading buffer was added and samples were boiled for 5
510 min before separation by SDS-PAGE followed by IB for detection of WDR5, pp65, or
511 pp28, as described above.

512

513 **IFA.** HELFs or HFFs were seeded onto coverslips and after attachment infected with
514 HCMV at an MOI of 3. Coverslips were collected at the indicated times post infection
515 and fixed with 4% paraformaldehyde. Target proteins were detected by incubation

516 with primary antibodies and appropriate secondary antibodies, as listed in Table 2,
517 and as described previously (47). Nuclei were counterstained with DAPI (Cat.#D9542,
518 Sigma). Images were obtained using a UltraVIEW VoX (Perkin Elmer) spinning disk
519 laser confocal scanning microscope. 3D z-axis image stacks were acquired with 0.2-
520 μm spacing and 3D modeling was performed using Volocity 5.5 software (Perkin
521 Elmer). Images were median-filtered to reduce noise and contrast was enhanced to
522 improve resolution.

523

524 **Cytosolic and nuclear fractionation.** HELFs were mock infected or infected with
525 HCMV at an MOI of 3, harvested at 72 hpi, and fractionated using the Qproteome
526 Cell Compartment kit (Cat.#37502, Qiagen) as described previously (64). Fractions
527 were analyzed by IB using GAPDH and Lamin B1 antibodies to confirm separation of
528 cytosolic and nuclear fractions, respectively.

529

530 **Quantitation of viral genome copy number.** Genomic DNA from each fraction
531 were analyzed by qPCR to quantitate viral DNAs using HCMV UL83 primers as
532 described previously (53). Means and standard deviations (SD) from at least three
533 independent experiments were calculated.

534

535 **Virus particles and capsid purification.** HELs were infected with HCMV at an MOI
536 of 0.02 and harvested after CPE reached 100%. Culture medium was collected and
537 clarified by centrifugation at $2,000 \times g$ for 10 min. Virus particles were pelleted from
538 the supernatants at $100,000 \times g$ for 2 h at 4°C in an SW 32Ti rotor using a Beckman
539 OptimaTM L-100 XP Ultracentrifuge. The pellet was resuspended and layered onto an
540 iodixanol gradient that was prepared by sequentially layering 800 μl volumes of 50%,

541 40%, 30%, 20%, and 10% iodixanol (Cat.#D1556, Sigma) in PBS (v/v) followed by
542 incubation overnight at 4 °C. Gradients were then centrifuged $100,000 \times g$ for 2 h at 4
543 °C by using an SW 55Ti rotor and Optima™ MAX-XP Ultracentrifuge. The virion-
544 containing band was observed by light-scattering, collected, and stored at -80 °C.

545 For purification of nuclear capsids, infected HELs were harvested at 48 hpi, cell
546 pellets were washed with $1 \times$ phosphate-buffered saline (PBS) and incubated in NP-
547 40 lysis buffer (0.5% NP-40, 5 M NaCl, 1 M Tris-HCl, pH = 7.0) at 4 °C for 20 min.
548 Nuclei were centrifuged at $2,000 \times g$ for 10 min, resuspended in TNE (500 mM NaCl,
549 10 mM Tris-HCl, 1 mM EDTA, pH = 8.0), sonicated (VCX130, SONICS) at 25%
550 amplitude for 18 s (3s on, 3s off), and centrifuged at $2,000 \times g$ for 10 min. This step
551 was repeated once and combined supernatants were centrifuged at $10,000 \times g$ for 20
552 min at 4°C to remove cell debris. Supernatants containing capsids were subjected to
553 iodixanol density gradient centrifugation described above. Capsids were observed as
554 light-scattering bands, collected, and stored at -80 °C.

555

556 **Transmission electron microscopy (TEM).** HELFs (Ctl) and the WDR knockdown
557 HELFs (KD) were infected with HCMV at an MOI of 0.5 and harvested at 120 hpi.
558 Cells were fixed with 2.5% (W/V) glutaraldehyde for 1 h at room temperature then
559 treated with 1% osmium tetroxide and dehydrated through a graded series of ethanol
560 concentrations (from 30 to 100%) and embedding with an Embed 812 kit (Electron
561 Microscopy Sciences, Fort Washington, PA). Ultrathin sections (60 to 80 nm) of
562 embedded specimens were prepared and deposited onto formvar-coated copper grids
563 (200-mesh), stained with 2% (W/V) phosphotungstic acid (PTA, pH 6.8), and
564 observed under a Tecnai transmission electron microscope (FEI) operated at 200 kV
565 as described previously (47).

566

567 **Immuno-electron microscopy.** Purified virions were mock treated or treated with 2%
568 Triton X-100, then adsorbed onto carbon-coated nickel 150 mesh grids for 2 h at room
569 temperature and blocked with 5% goat serum albumin. Grids were incubated with
570 antibodies to WDR5, gB, pp28, or normal mouse IgG overnight at 4 °C in a
571 humidified chamber. Grids were washed three times for 1 min with PBS and then
572 incubated for 30 min at room temperature with 10-nm colloidal gold-affiniPure goat
573 anti-mouse IgG. Grids were washed once with PBS and once with water, then stained
574 with 2% (w/v) phosphotungstic acid for 30 s. Grids were observed using a Tecnai G²
575 20 TWIN transmission electron microscope (FEI) operated at 200 kV.

576

577 **LC-MS/MS analysis.** LC-MS/MS analysis was performed on a Q Exactive mass
578 spectrometer (Thermo Scientific) that is coupled to Easy nLC (Proxeon Biosystems,
579 now Thermo Fisher Scientific) for 60 min. The mass spectrometer was operated in
580 positive ion mode. MS data was acquired using a data-dependent top 10 method
581 dynamically choosing the most abundant precursor ions from the survey scan (300–
582 1800 m/z) for HCD fragmentation. Automatic gain control (AGC) target was set to
583 3e6, and maximum inject time to 10 ms. Dynamic exclusion duration was 40.0 s.
584 Survey scans were acquired at a resolution of 70,000 at m/z 200 and resolution for
585 HCD spectra was set to 17,500 at m/z 200. Isolation width was 2 m/z. Normalized
586 collision energy was 30 eV and the underfill ratio, which specifies the minimum
587 percentage of the target value likely to be reached at maximum fill time, was defined
588 as 0.1%. The instrument was run with peptide recognition mode enabled.

589

590 **Statistical analyses.** Data were analyzed by chi-square or one-way ANOVA, as
591 appropriate, using SPSS software (version 18.0; SPSS). Results were shown as means
592 \pm one standard deviation from three independent experiments. A value of $P < 0.05$
593 was considered significant.

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808

809

810 **FIGURE LEGENDS**

811 **Fig 1. Perinuclear relocalization of WDR5 is specifically induced by HCMV and**

812 **MCMV infection.** HELFs (A and C) or NIH3T3 (B) were infected with the indicated

813 viruses at an MOI of 1. At 48 hpi, cells were fixed and stained with antibodies against

814 WDR5(red) and with either HCMV IE1 protein (A) (green) or MCMV mIE1 (green)

815 (B). Infected cells (C) were detected using corresponding GFP-expressing

816 recombinant viruses. All antibodies used in IFA were mouse monoclonal antibodies.

817 Nuclei were counterstained with DAPI (white). M, mock-infected cells; scale bar = 10

818 μm .

819

820 **Fig 2. HCMV infection induces re-localization and oligomerization of WDR5.** (A)

821 HELFs were mock- (M) or HCMV-infected (V) at an MOI of 3 then processed for

822 immunofluorescence with antibodies against IE1 (green), WDR5 (red), or nuclei

823 (DAPI, white) at the indicated times post infection. Images shown were representative

824 of three independent experiments. All antibodies used in IFA were mouse monoclonal

825 antibodies. Scale bar = 10 μm . (B) Over 100 cells in five representative fields from

826 each independent experiment described in (A) were counted to determine the

827 percentages of infected cells exhibiting diffuse nuclear localization of WDR5 (normal)

828 versus accumulation of WDR5 in perinuclear foci. Data were analyzed using the chi-

829 squared test. N, number counted cells; NS, not significant; ***, $P < 0.001$. (C) HELFs

830 were mock- (M) or HCMV-infected (V) at an MOI of 3. At 96 hpi cytosolic and

831 nuclear fractions were prepared and analyzed by IB for WDR5, pp28, IE1, GAPDH,

832 or Lamin B1. (D) HELFs were mock- or HCMV-infected at an MOI = 1. At 48 hpi,

833 infected cells were treated with DMSO or nuclear export inhibitor Leptomycin B

834 (LMB, 5 μM) for 12 h, and were co-stained for WDR5 (red), viral protein pp65 (green)

835 and nuclei were counterstained with DAPI (white). All antibodies used in IFA were
836 mouse monoclonal antibodies. Scale bar = 10 μ m.

837

838 **Fig 3. WDR5 perinuclear accumulation requires viral replication.** HELFs were
839 mock- (M), UV-inactivated HCMV (UV), or live HCMV-infected (V) at an MOI of 3
840 in the presence of DMSO, GCV (100 μ g/ml), or PAA (100 μ g/ml). At 72 hpi, samples
841 were collected and analyzed. (A) The upper panel shows protein levels of WDR5 and
842 viral proteins determined by IB with actin as a loading control. The lower panel shows
843 the relative levels of WDR5 protein in infected vs. mock-infected cultures normalized
844 with GAPDH. Data from three independent experiments were analyzed by one-way
845 ANOVA, and the results are presented as averages \pm SD. *, $P < 0.05$; **, $P < 0.01$,
846 NS, no significance. (B) Relative mRNA levels of WDR5. Samples were harvested at
847 the indicated times, and total RNA was isolated. Relative mRNA levels of WDR5
848 were determined by qRT-PCR; GAPDH is an internal control. Data were normalized
849 to levels in mock-infected cells to provide fold-changes post HCMV infection. (C)
850 Accumulation of WDR5 in perinuclear region. WDR5 perinuclear foci are indicated
851 by white arrows; scale bar = 10 μ m.

852

853 **Fig 4. WDR5 localizes to vAC and MTOC.** (A) HELFs were infected with HCMV
854 at an MOI of 3 and at 72 hpi co-stained for WDR5 and markers of cytoskeleton (α -
855 tubulin), centrosome (γ -tubulin), Golgi (58K), or early endosome (EEA1). (B) HELFs
856 were infected for 72 h and then treated with 2 μ M NOC for the times indicated prior
857 to staining for WDR5. (C) HCMV-infected HELFs were stained at 96 hpi for WDR5
858 (red) and co-stained for viral proteins pp28, pp65, or gB (green). Panel below shows a
859 3D-reconstruction of WDR5 colocalization with gB from the cell shown in the panel

860 above. Scale bar = 10 μ m. (D) WDR5 associated with HCMV capsid protein in vAC.
861 HFFs were infected with HCMV at an MOI of 3 and stained for WDR5 (green), SCP
862 (red), and DNA (blue) at 96 hpi and analyzed with Nikon A1R HD25 confocal system.
863 Top panels show deconvolved single channel maximum intensity z axis projections of
864 a representative cell. Panels below show 3-D reconstructions of deconvolved confocal
865 Z-series images of the vAC. All antibodies used in IFA were mouse monoclonal
866 antibodies, nuclei were counterstained with DAPI. and scale bar = 10 μ m.

867

868 **Fig 5. Knockdown WDR5 altered vAC formation and virion morphogenesis**

869 (A) HELFs were transduced with shRNA to WDR5 (KD) or a scrambled control
870 shRNA (Ctl) as described previously (47). Cells were infected with HCMV at an MOI
871 of 0.5, harvested at 96 hpi, stained for gB with mouse monoclonal antibody, nuclei
872 were counterstained with DAPI, scale bar = 10 μ m (Left upper panels). Based on
873 morphology, vACs were classified as regular or irregular, and representative images
874 are shown (a, b, c, and d, Left lower panels). Regular and irregular vACs were
875 quantitated (Right panel). n, number of quantitated infected cells; data were analyzed
876 by chi-squared test. ***, $P < 0.001$.(B) Ctl (a to e) and KD (f to k) cells were infected
877 with HCMV at an MOI of 0.5. At 120hpi, cells were fixed, embedded, sectioned and
878 negative-stained for TEM analysis. Representative images are shown to illustrate the
879 enveloped virions (arrowheads), and nonenveloped capsids (arrows) in the cytoplasm.
880 (C) Quantitation and classification of viral particles. About three hundred total
881 cytoplasmic viral particles were counted. The percentages of normal virions and
882 nonenveloped capsids in each infection are illustrated. Data were analyzed by chi-
883 squared test. n, number of cytoplasmic viral particles counted cells; ***, $P < 0.001$.

884

885

886 **Fig 6. Subcellular localization of different WDR5 deletion mutants**

887 (A) Schematic representation of N-terminal Flag-tagged full-length WDR5 and
888 deletion mutants. Flag, Flag tag; L, linker-GAAAAS; NT, N-terminal; WD, WD40-
889 repeat motif. (B) Expression vectors encoding full-length WDR5 or deletion mutants
890 were transfected in HELF cells. At 24 hours post transfection, cells were mock-
891 infected (M) or infected with HCMV (V) at an MOI of 3. At 72 hpi, samples were
892 collected and analyzed by IFA for pp28 (green), Flag (red), or nuclei (DAPI, white).
893 All antibodies used in IFA were mouse monoclonal antibodies. Scale bar = 10 μ m.

894

895 **Fig 7. WDR5 co-purifies with HCMV particles by gradient fractionation.** (A)

896 Flow chart illustrating the analysis of particles from mock- or HCMV-infected
897 cultures by iodixanol density gradient centrifugation (see Materials and Methods for
898 details). (B) Gradient fractions derived from mock-infected (M) or infected (V)
899 cultures were analyzed by immune-dot-blot for WDR5, gB, or pUL48. (C) Viral-
900 genome copies in each fraction were determined by qPCR and plotted together with
901 protein levels quantitated using ImageJ software from the dot-blots shown in (B).

902

903 **Fig 8. WDR5 is present in HCMV virions.** (A) Purified HCMV virions were mock

904 treated or treated with 2% Triton X-100 for 1 hour at room temperature then analyzed
905 by iodixanol density gradient centrifugation. Fractions collected from gradients of
906 virions that were mock treated (top) or Triton X-100-treated (bottom), as well as
907 unfractionated lysates from mock- (M) or HCMV-infected (V) HELFs, were analyzed
908 by IB using the indicated antibodies. (B) Mock- or Triton X-100-treated virions were
909 analyzed by immuno-gold electron microscopy using mAbs to gB (a), pp28 (b),

910 WDR5 (c), or normal mouse IgG (d). Samples were negatively stained with
911 phosphotungstic acid and visualized by electron microscopy (25,000 × magnification).
912 (C) HCMV virions were purified as previously described. Nuclei from infected-HELs
913 were prepared at 60 hpi and intranuclear capsids were purified as in described in
914 Materials and Methods. Purified virions and capsids were visualized by electron
915 microscopy. The components (viral proteins and WDR5) were analyzed by IB.

916

917 **Fig 9. WDR5 interacts with MCP, pp150, pp65, pIRS1, and pTRS1.** (A) HELF
918 overexpressing with Flag-tagged WDR5 were mock- (M) or HCMV-infected (V) at
919 an MOI of 3. At 96 hpi lysates were immunoprecipitated by anti-Flag antibody,
920 separated by SDS-PAGE, and stained with Coomassie Brilliant Blue. Four protein
921 species specific to infected cells (red arrows, lane 4) were cut from the gel and
922 combined and analyzed by LC-MS/MS. (B) Spectral counts of identified viral
923 proteins by mass spectrometric analyses are shown. (C-H) HEK293T cells were co-
924 transfected with a plasmid expressing HA-tagged WDR5 (HA-WDR5) along with
925 plasmids expressing His-tagged pp28 (pp28-6×His) (C), Myc-tagged MCP (6×Myc-
926 MCP) (D), Flag-tagged pp65 (Flag-pp65) (E), Myc-tagged pp150 (6×Myc-pp150) (F),
927 Flag-tagged pIRS1 (Flag-IRS1) (G), or V5-tagged pTRS1 (pTRS1-V5) (H). After 48
928 h lysates were immunoprecipitated and then immunoblotted using the indicated
929 antibodies.

930

931 **Fig 10. Working model.** In the nucleus WDR5 facilitates capsid nuclear egress by
932 promoting assembly of the NEC (Yang B, *et al.* J Virol 2018). WDR5 may egress
933 from the nuclei with the capsids and then be transported to the vAC together with

934 capsids and/or tegument proteins (*eg.* pp150 and pp65, *etc.*). In the vAC, WDR5 is
935 incorporated into maturing virions.

FIG1

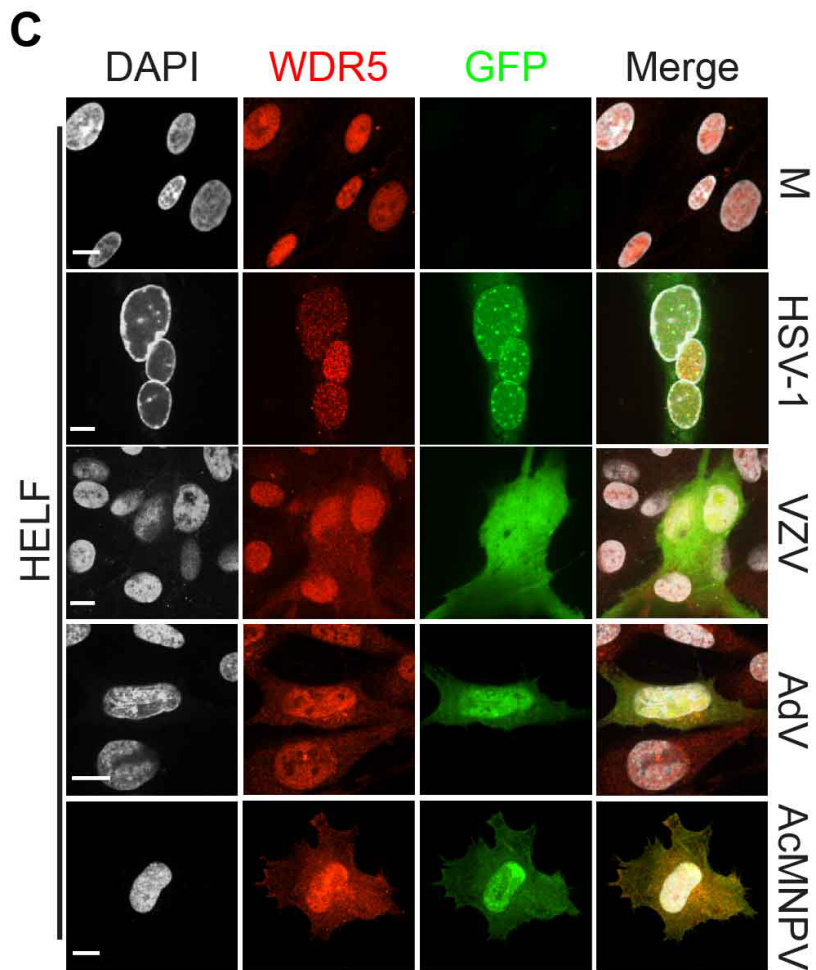
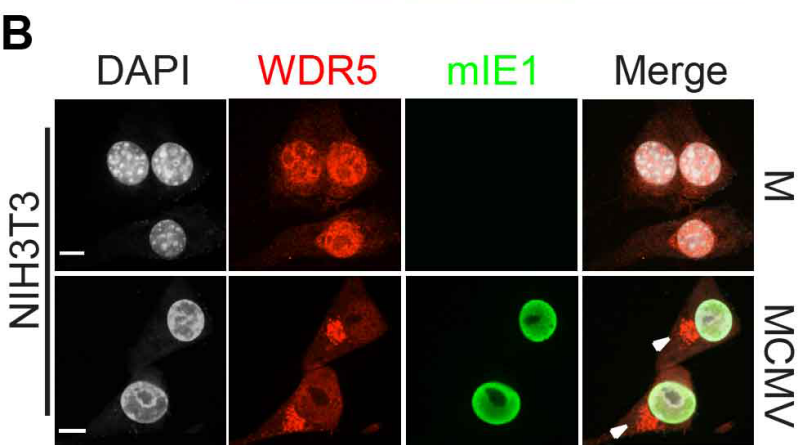
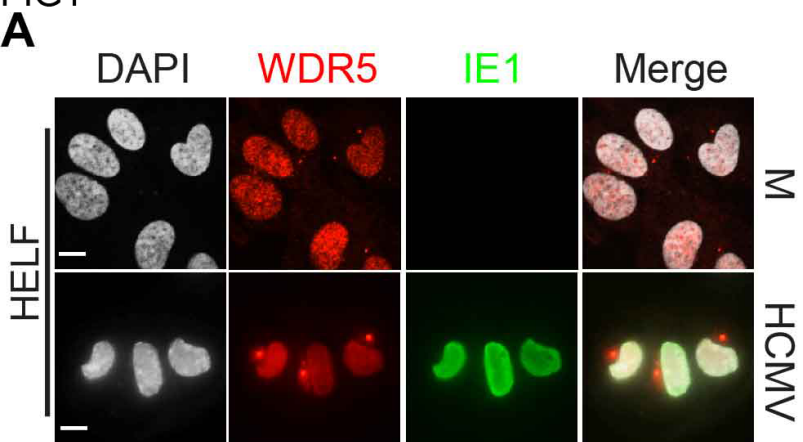
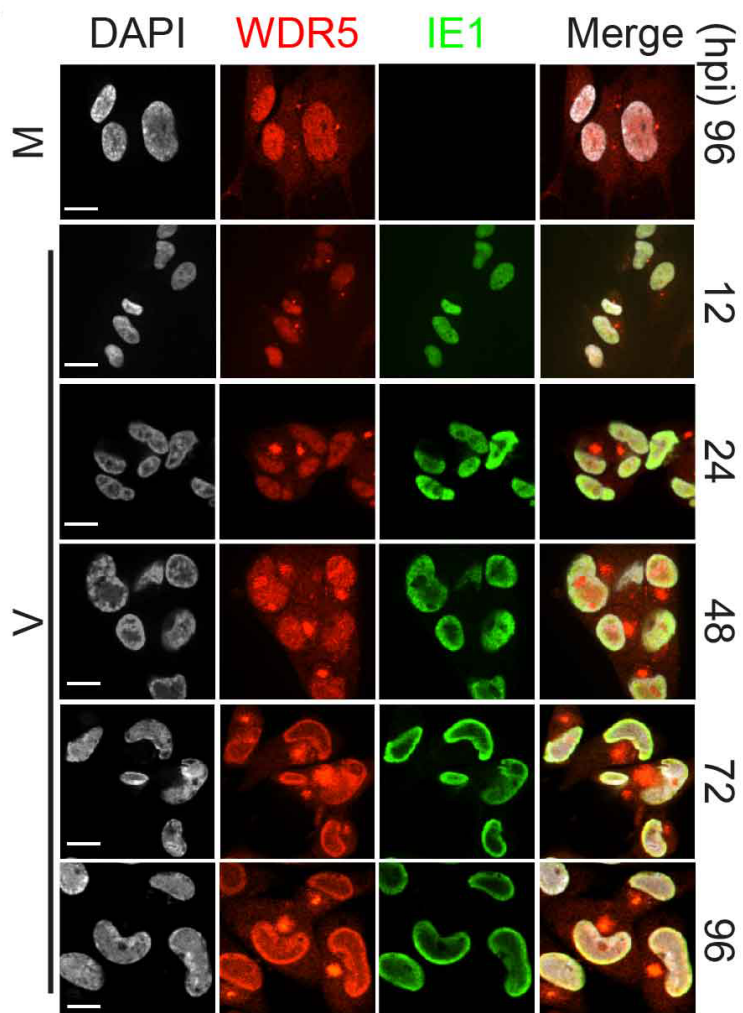
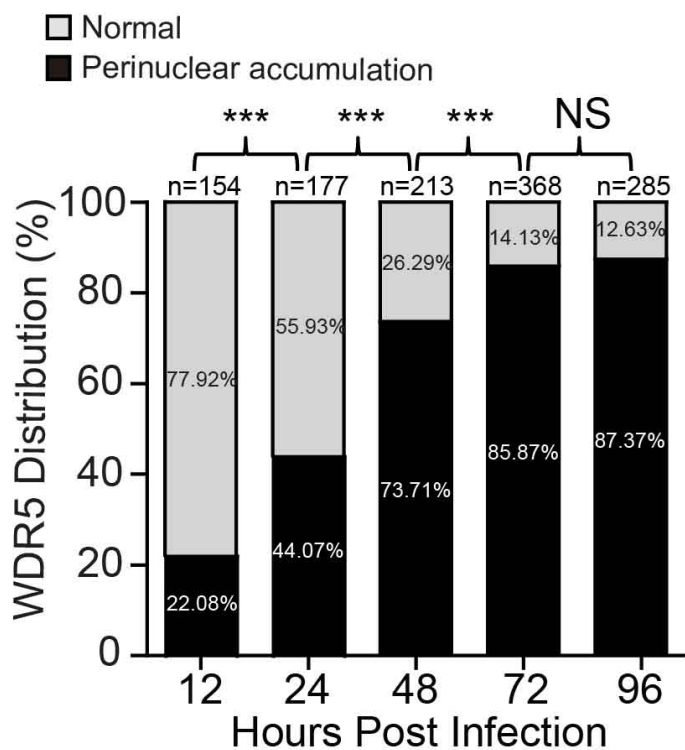


FIG2

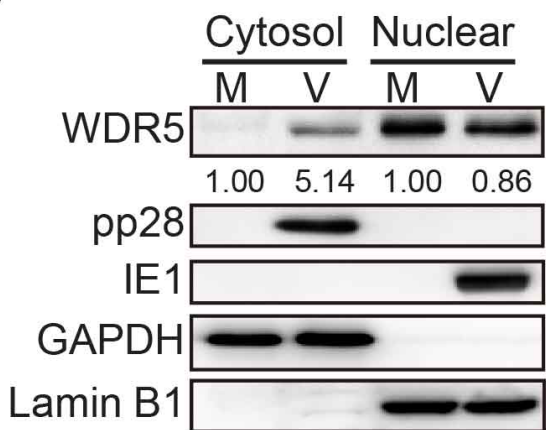
A



B



C



D

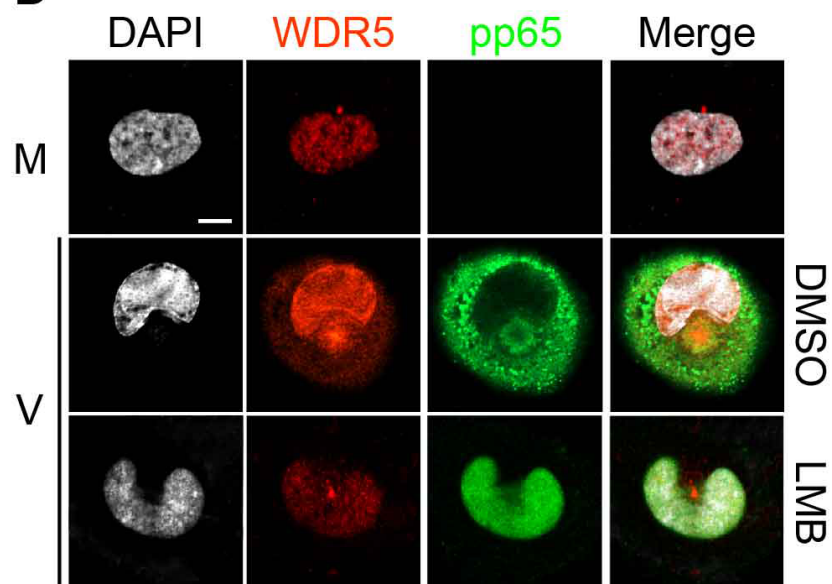


FIG3

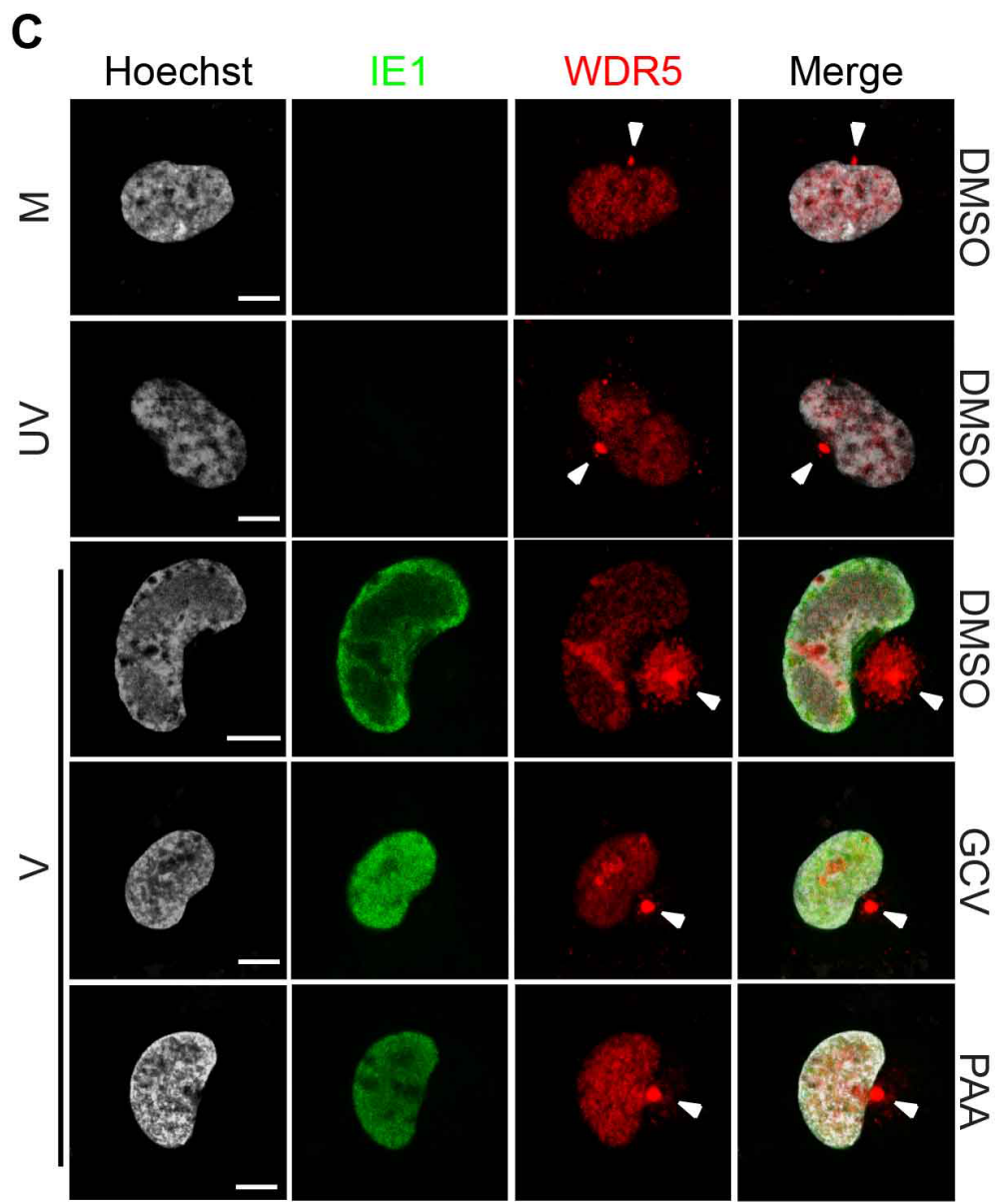
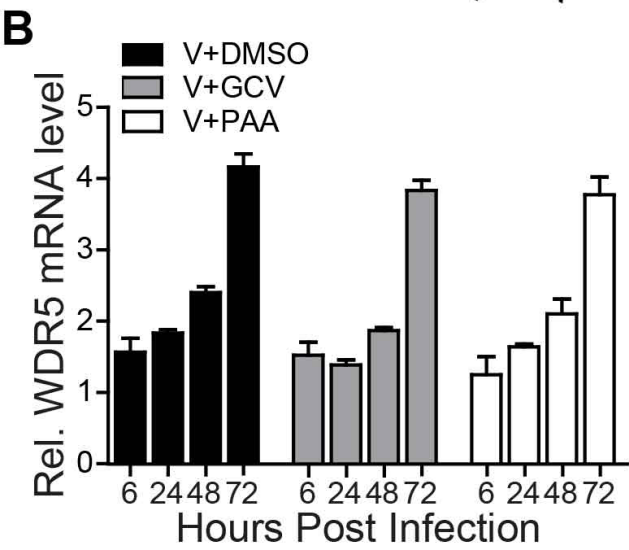
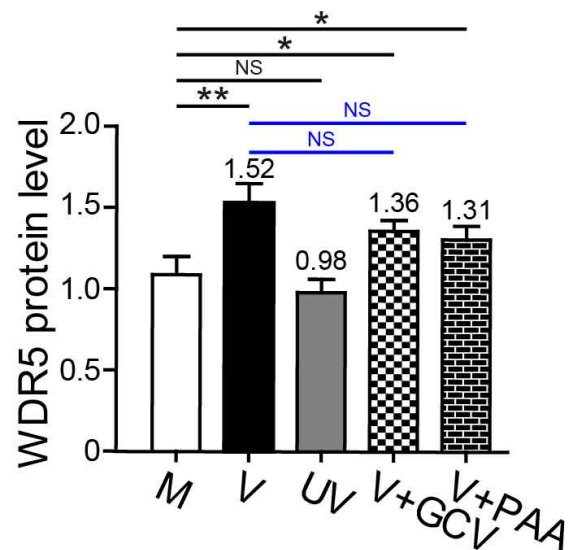
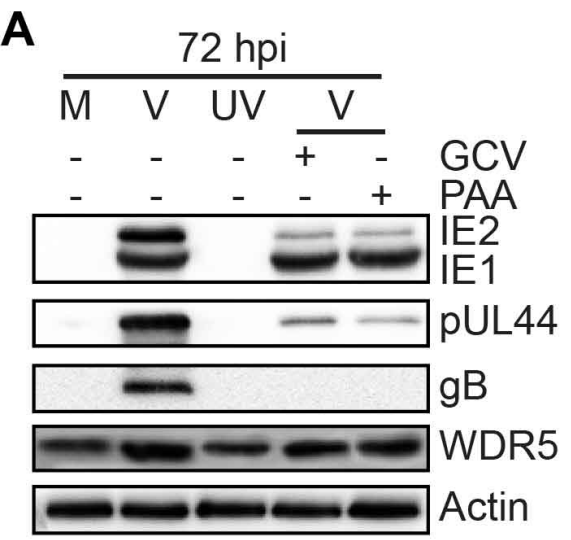
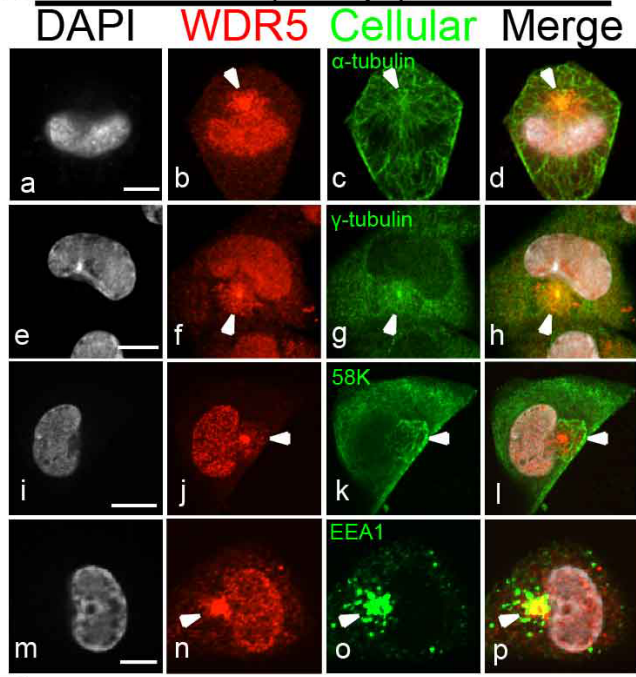
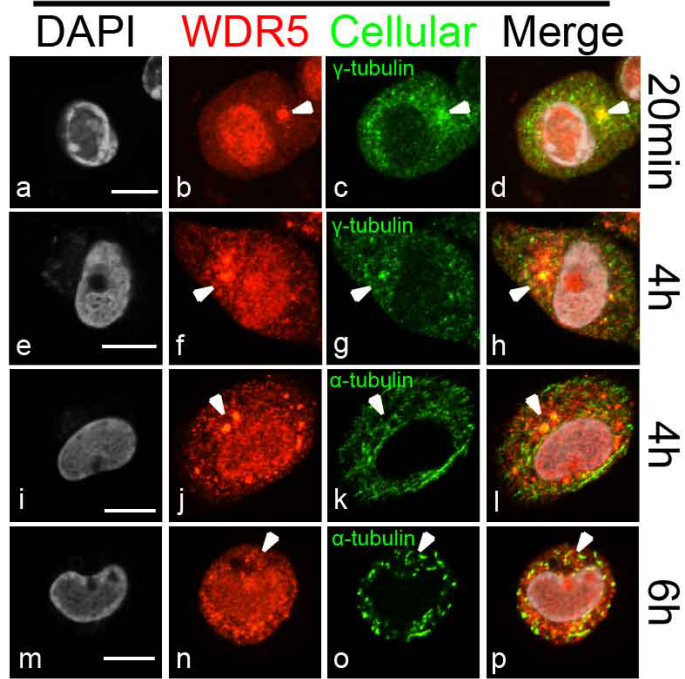


FIG4

A V (72 hpi)



B V + NOC



C V (96 hpi)

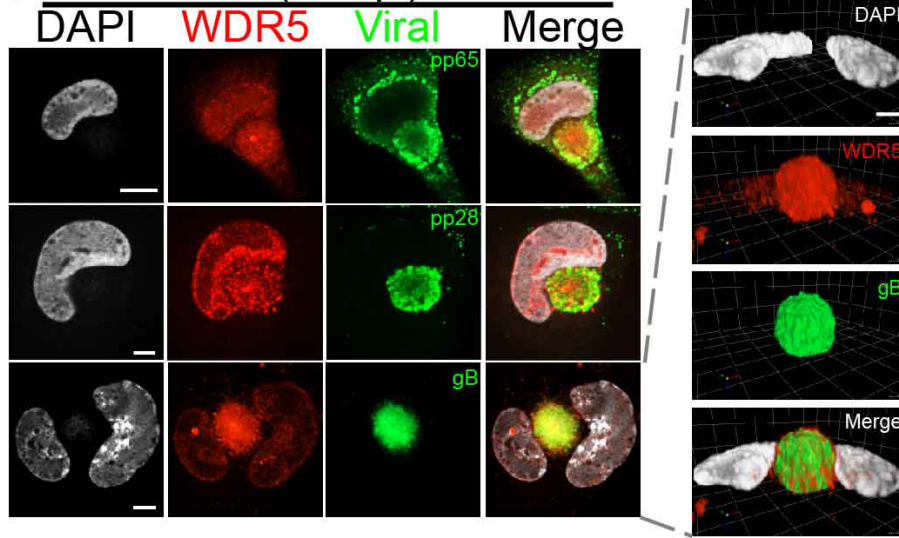
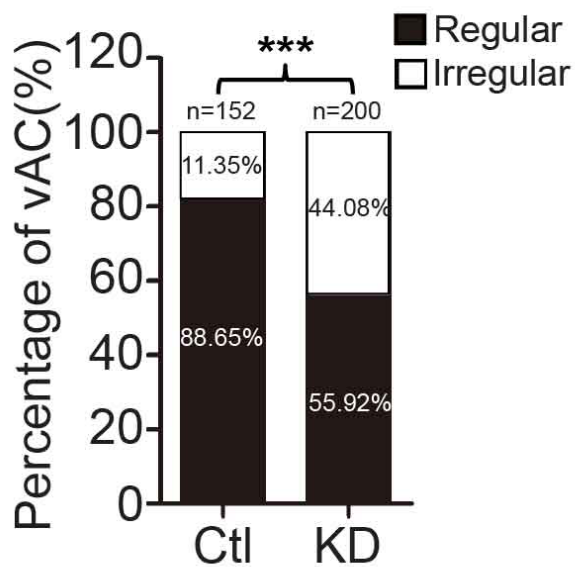
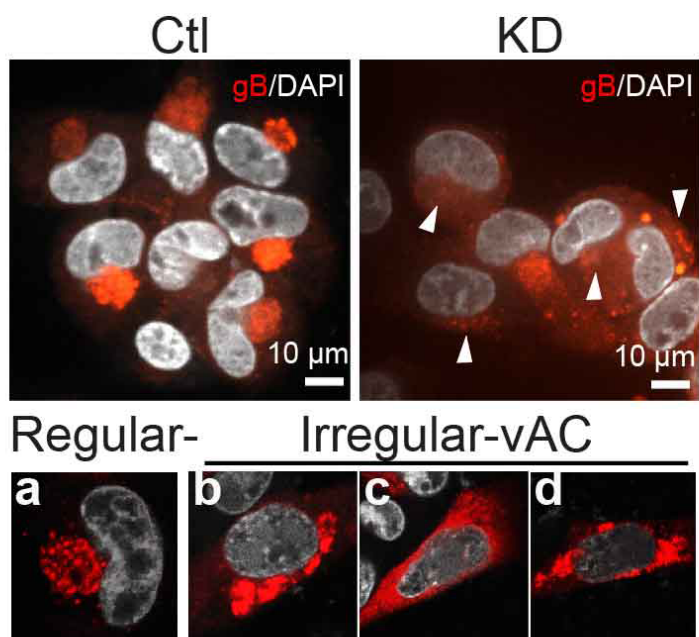
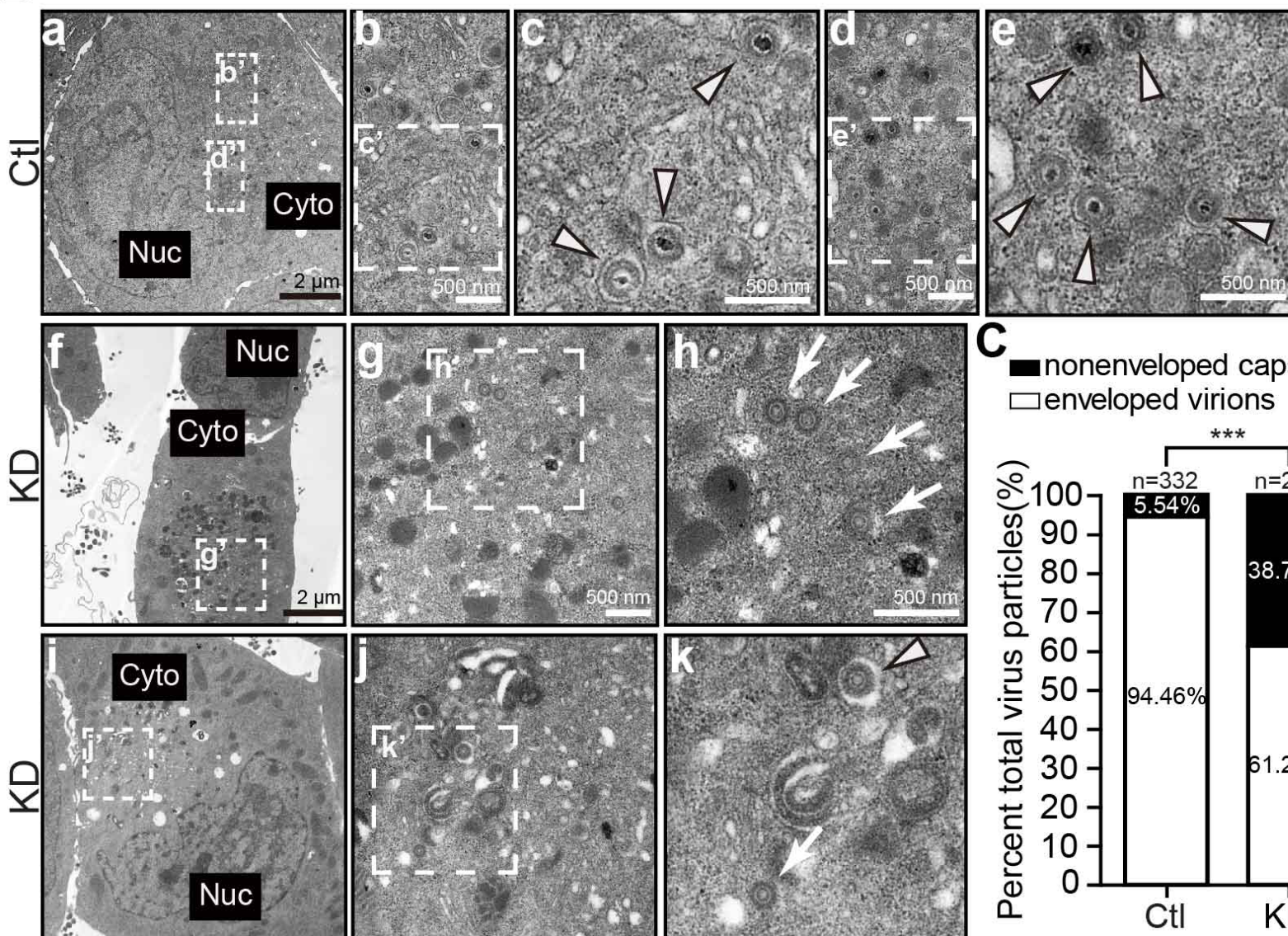


FIG5

A



B



C

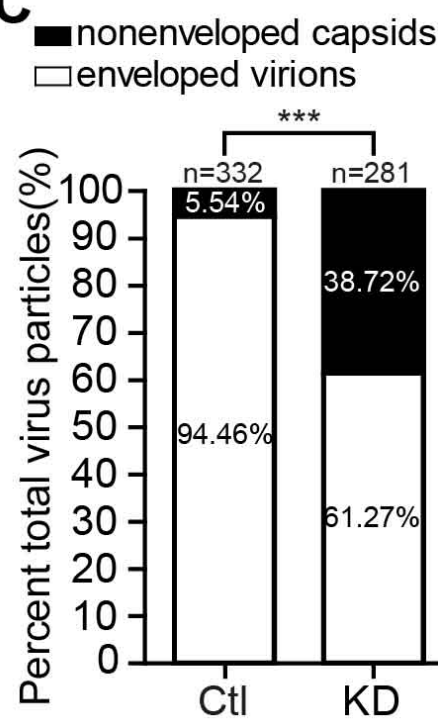
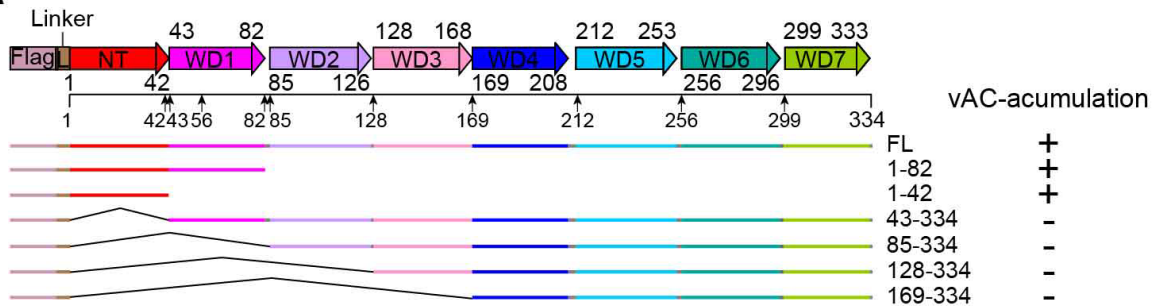


FIG6

A



B

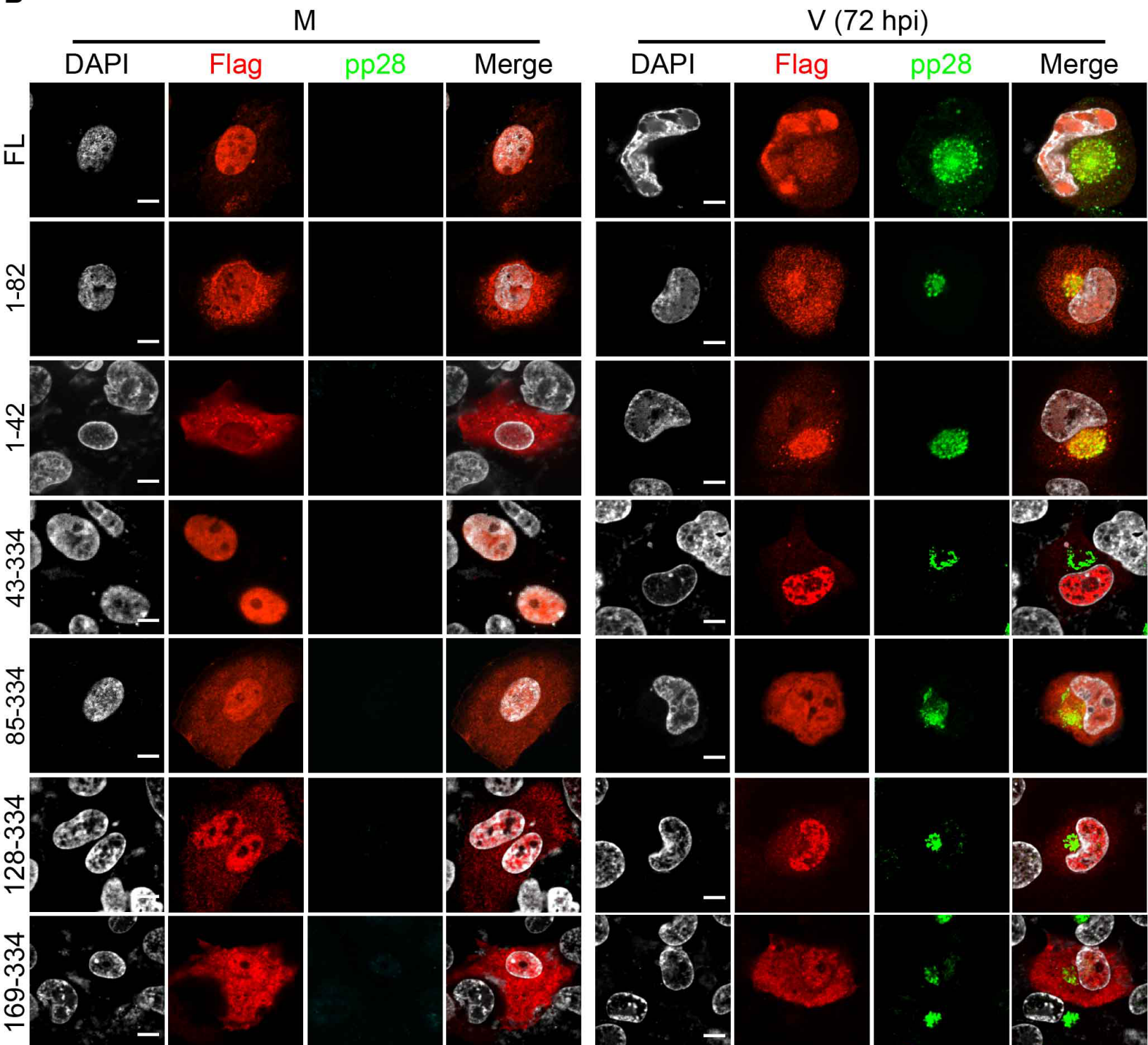


FIG7

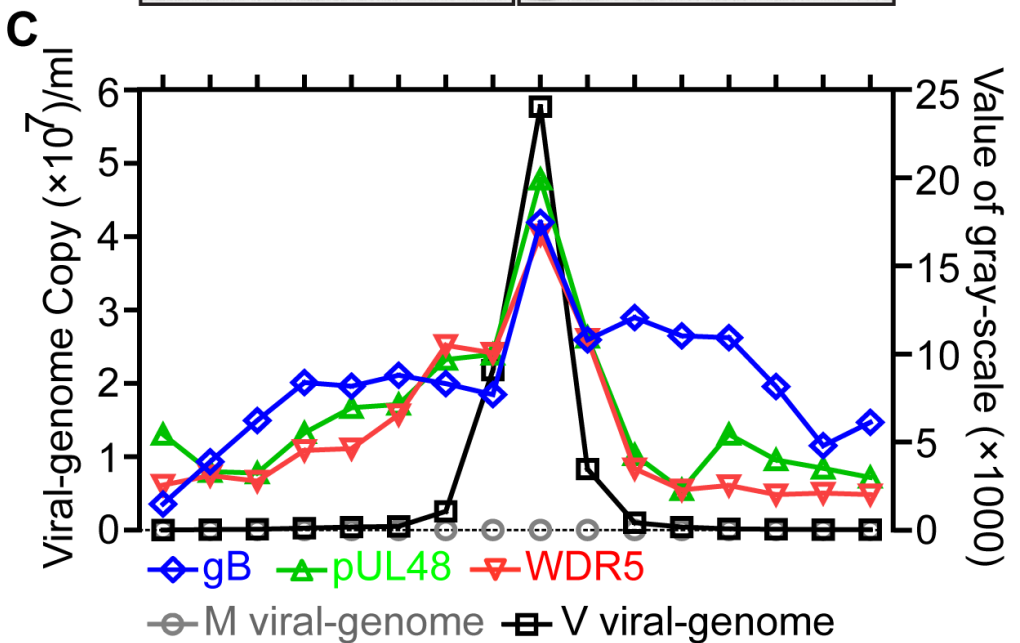
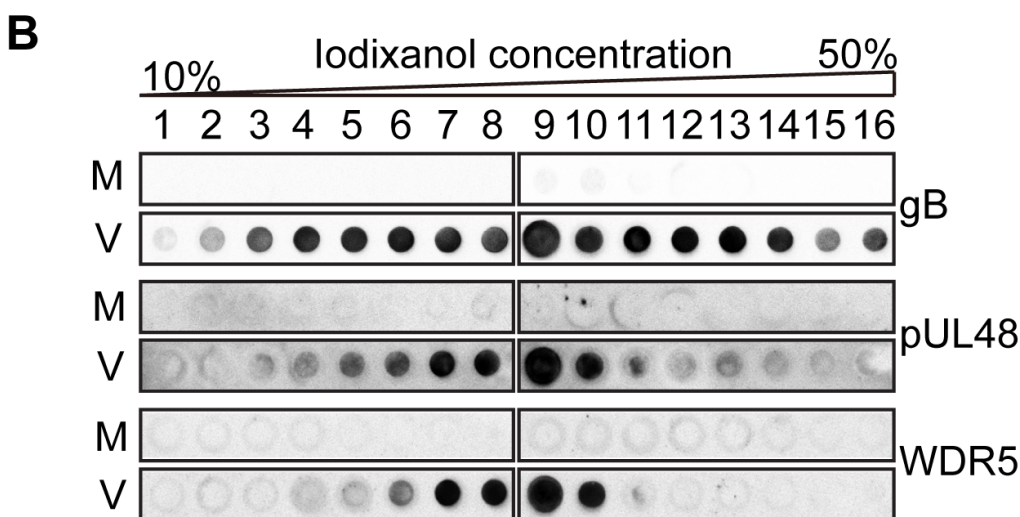
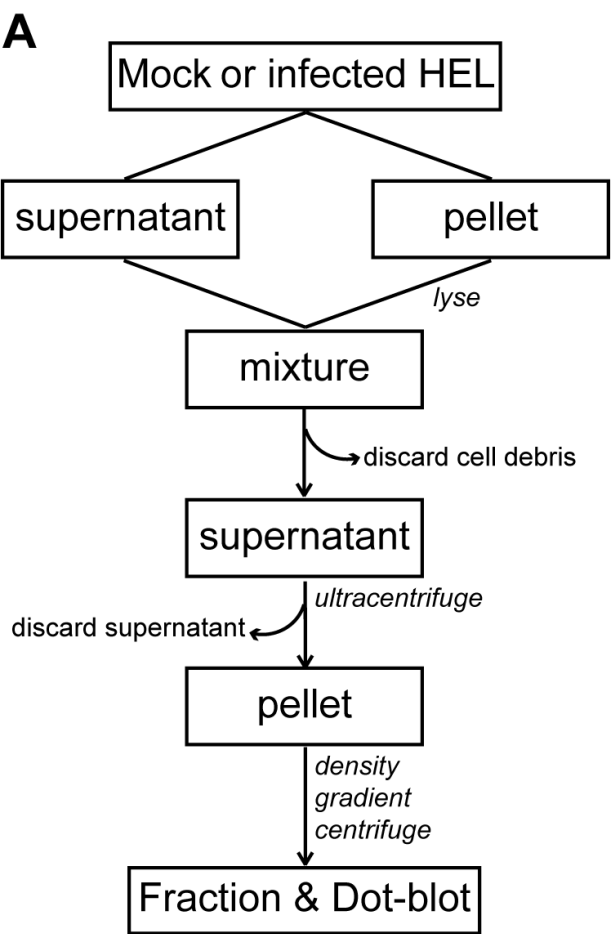


FIG8

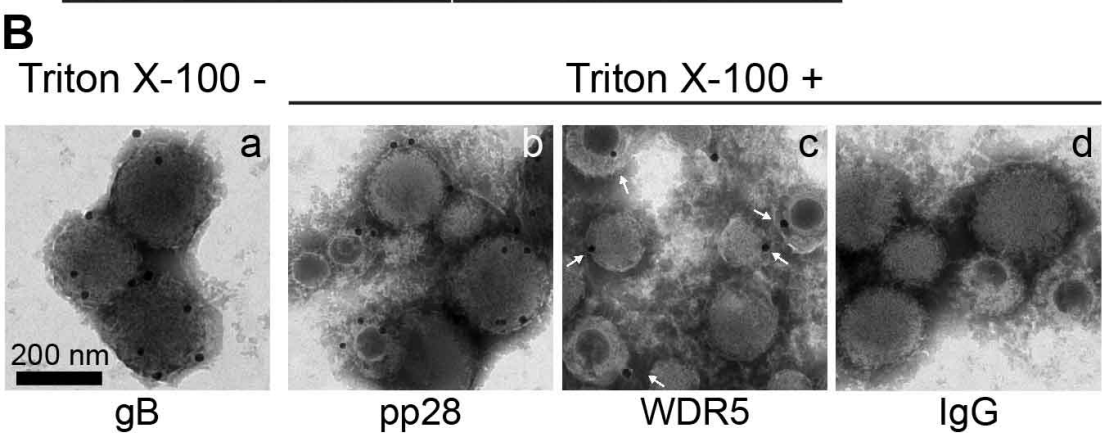
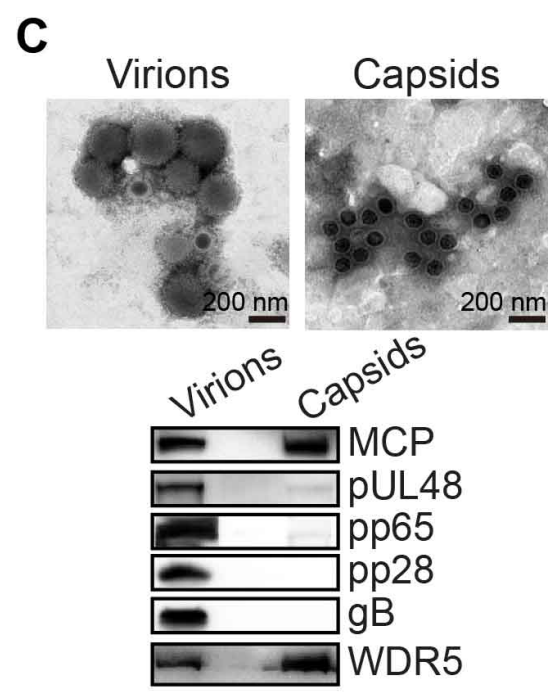
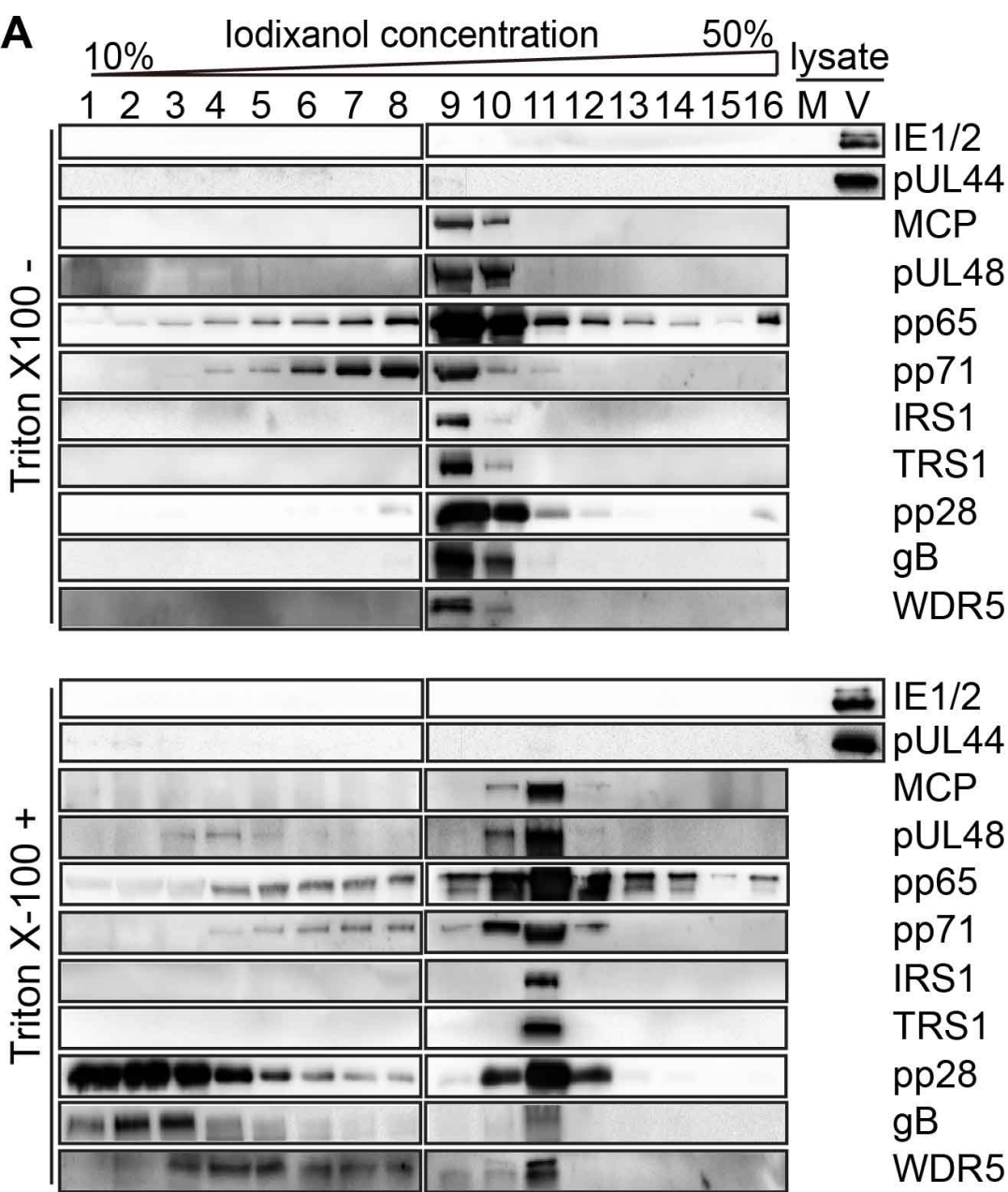
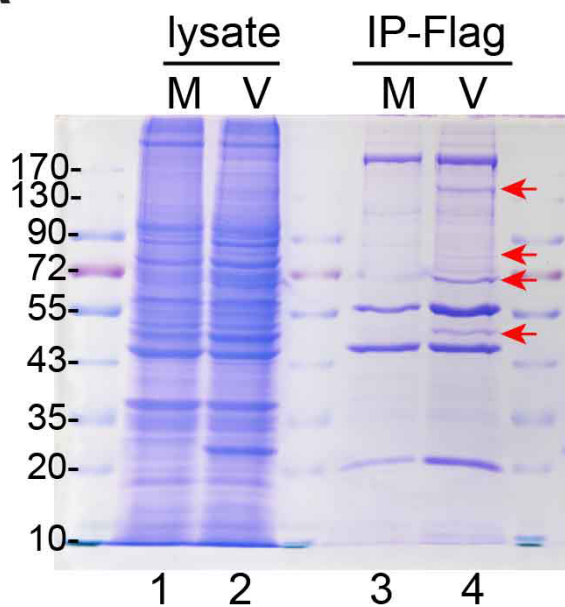
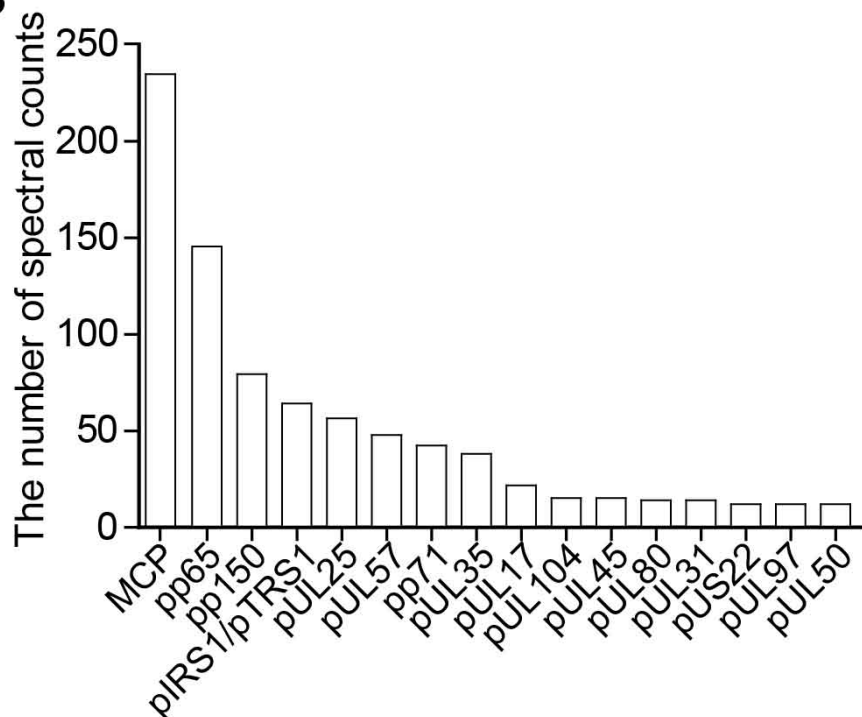


FIG9

A

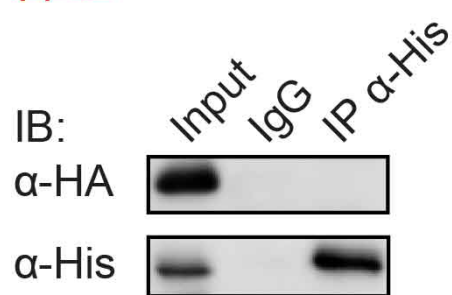


B



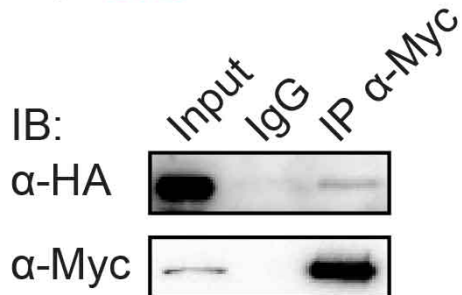
C

pp28-His & HA-WDR5



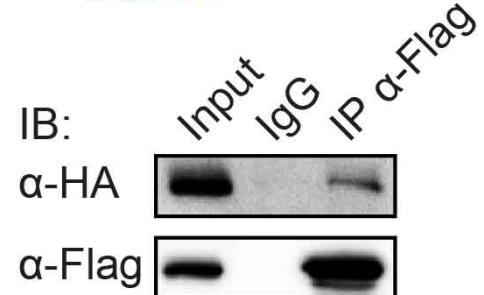
D

Myc-MCP & HA-WDR5



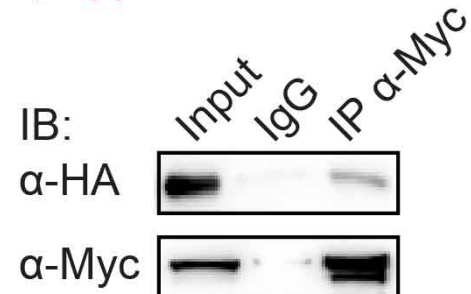
E

Flag-pp65 & HA-WDR5



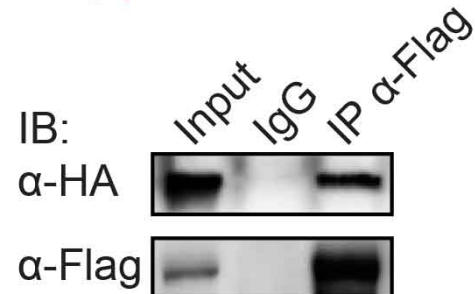
F

Myc-pp150 & HA-WDR5



G

Flag-pIRS1 & HA-WDR5



H

pTRS1-V5 & HA-WDR5

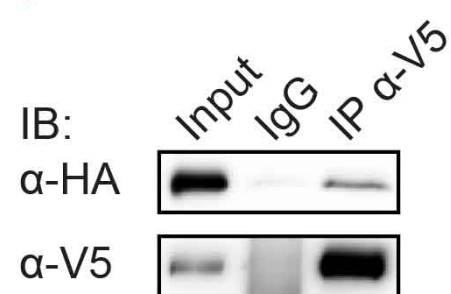
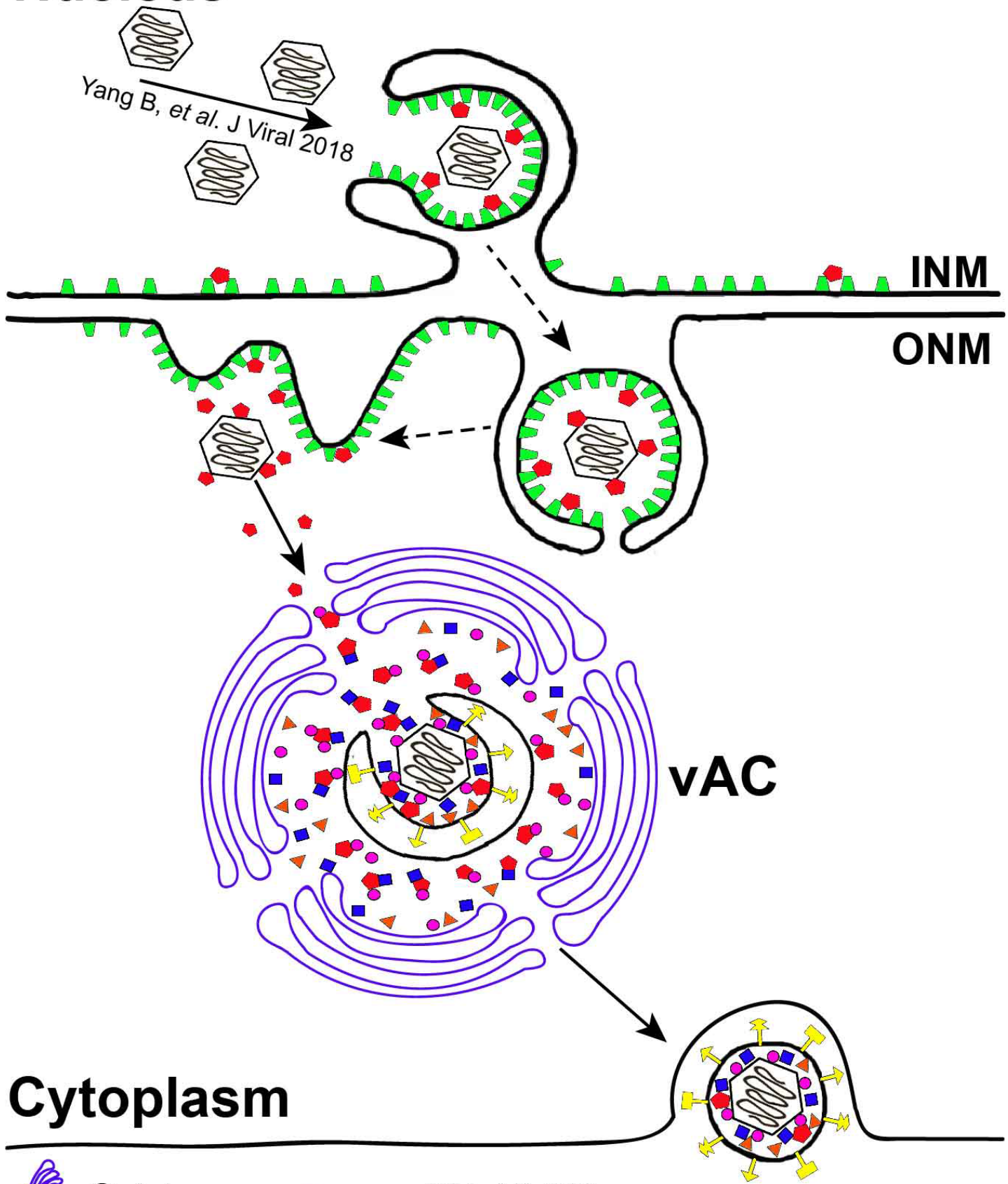


FIG10

Nucleus

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Cytoplasm

- Golgi
- NEC
- WDR5
- pp65(pUL83)
- Other tegument proteins
- Glycoproteins

Table 1. Primers used in this study

Plasmids	Primers
HA-WDR5	F 5'- <u>GGAATTC</u> GGATGGCGACGGAGGAGAAGAAGC-3' R 5'-CCGCTCGAGTTAGCAGTCACTCTTCCACAGTT-3'
Flag-WDR5	F 5'-GCTCTAGAATGGCGACGGAGGAGAAGAAGC-3' R 5'- <u>GGAATTC</u> GGCAGTCACTCTTCCACAGTTT-3'
Flag-pp65	F 5'-CGGGATCCATGGAGTCGCGCGGTCGCCGTTGTCC-3' R 5'-CGGGGTACCTCAACCTCGGTGCTTTTTGGGCG-3'
pp28-6×his	F 5'-CGGGATCCATGGGTGCCGAACCTTGCAAACG-3' R 5'-GCTCTAGACTAAAGGGCAAGGAGGCGGCGG-3'
Flag-IRS1	F 5'-CGGGATCCATGGCCCAGCGCAACGGCATGTC-3' R 5'-GGGGTACCTCAATGATGAACGTGGTGAGGGGCG-3'
6Myc-pp150	F 5'-GGCGCGGCAGCCGCTTCAAGTTTGCAGTTTATCGGTCTACAGCG-3' R 5'-GAGGTTGATTAGGATCTATCGATCTATTCTCCGTGTTCTTAATCTTC-3'
6Myc-MCP	F 5'-GGCGCGGCAGCCGCTTCAAGAGAACTGGTCGGCGCTCGAGCTCC-3' R 5'-GAGGTTGATTAGGATCTATCGATTACAGAGTTAAATAACATGGATTG-3'

TABLE 2 Primary and Secondary Antibodies Used in IFA and IB.

Primary Antibody	Host / Isotype	Source / Cat.#
Normal Mouse IgG	Mouse polyclonal	Beyotime/A7028
Epitope tag		
Flag	Mouse monoclonal/IgG1	Sigma/F3165
HA	Mouse monoclonal/IgG1	Sigma/H9658
6×His	Mouse monoclonal/IgG1	Proteintech/66005-1-Ig
6×His	Rabbit polyclonal	Abcam/ab9108
V5	Rabbit polyclonal	Proteintech/14440-1-AP
Myc	Mouse monoclonal/IgG1	Proteintech/66003-2-Ig
Cellular		
WDR5 (36 KDa)	Rabbit polyclonal	Sigma/07-706
WDR5 (36 KDa)	Mouse monoclonal/IgG2b	Abcam/ab56919
WDR5 (36 KDa)	Mouse monoclonal/IgG2b	Santa Cruz/sc-100895
GAPDH (36 KDa)	Rabbit polyclonal	Proteintech/10494-1-AP
GFP (30kDa)	Rabbit polyclonal	Proteintech/50430-2-AP
Lamin B1 (66 KDa)	Rabbit polyclonal	Proteintech/12987-1-AP
β-Actin (43 KDa)	Mouse monoclonal/IgG1	Proteintech/60008-1-Ig
α-Tubulin (50 KDa)	Mouse monoclonal/IgG1	Beyotime/AT819
γ-Tubulin (48 KDa)	Mouse monoclonal/IgG1	Gift from Dr. Yan Zhou in Wuhan University, China
EEA1 (180 KDa)	Mouse monoclonal/IgG1	Abcam/ab70521
58K (96 KDa)	Mouse monoclonal/IgG1	Abcam/ab27043
HCMV		
IE1(UL123) (72 KDa)	Mouse monoclonal/IgG2a	(59)
IE1/2 (UL123/122) (72/86 KDa)	Mouse monoclonal/IgG1	Virusys/P1215
pUL44 (ICP36) (46 KDa)	Mouse monoclonal/IgG1	Virusys/P1202-1
gB (UL55) (52 and 105 KDa)	Mouse monoclonal/IgG1	Virusys/P1201
pp71 (UL82) (71 KDa)	Goat polyclonal	Santa Cruz/sc-33323
pp65 (UL83) (65 KDa)	Mouse monoclonal/IgG1	Virusys/P1205
pp28 (UL99) (28 KDa)	Mouse monoclonal/IgG2a	Virusys/CA004-1
pUL48 (253 KDa)	Rabbit polyclonal	Gift from Dr. Wade Gibson in Johns Hopkins University, U.S.
pIRS1(91 KDa)	Mouse monoclonal/IgG1	(60) Gift from Dr. Thomas E. Shenk in Princeton University, U.S.
pTRS1(84 KDa)	Mouse monoclonal/IgG1	(61) Gift from Dr. Thomas E. Shenk in Princeton University, U.S.
MCP (150KDa)	Mouse monoclonal/IgG2a	(61) (62)
MCMV		
mIE1 (m123) (89 KDa)	Mouse Monoclonal/IgG1	Gift from Dr. Qiyi Tang in Howard University College of Medicine, U.S. (63)
Secondary antibody	Host / Isotype	Source / Cat.#
Peroxidase-anti-Mouse IgG	Goat	Jackson ImmunoResearch Laboratories/115-035-003
Peroxidase-anti-Rabbit IgG	Goat	Jackson ImmunoResearch Laboratories/111-035-003
Peroxidase-anti-Goat IgG	Donkey	Jackson ImmunoResearch Laboratories/705-035-147
TRITC-anti-Mouse-IgG2b	Goat	Southern Biotech/1090-03
TRITC-anti-Mouse-IgG2a	Goat	Southern Biotech/1080-03
AF488-anti-Mouse-IgG1	Goat	Thermo Fisher/A-21121
AF488-anti-Mouse-IgG2a	Goat	Thermo Fisher/A-21131
AF647-anti-Mouse-IgG1	Goat	Thermo Fisher/A-21240
AF647-anti-Mouse-IgG2a	Goat	Thermo Fisher/A-21241
10 nm-gold-anti-mouse-IgG	Goat	Boster/GA1004

